I believe, the truth of that statement. There was a time when we were all hot and bothered over the Lebanon and landing troops there. A year or two ago no one would have ever have thought that the Cyprus crisis would be as quiet as it is today. These things pass more rapidly than one might think.

Senator Hicklenlooper. But the crisis didn't just take care of itself, did it?

Mr. Kennan. No.

Senator Hicklenlooper. It was really assured by the imposition of some rather forcful actions.

Mr. Kennan. Yes.

Senator Hicklenlooper. And it was a result of those forcful actions in each instance that discouraged these people who, while they had designs on these countries, at least in my view—

Mr. Kennan. I would certainly have no objection if we had been as smart about getting both in and out in South Vietnam as we were in Lebanon.

Senator Hicklenlooper. We got into Lebanon, with sufficient force that nobody dared to do anything. Things quieted down and then we removed the troops but they haven't quieted down in Vietnam yet.

Mr. Kennan. I am not sure, sir, of course, that these situations are comparable. I merely wanted to say we are a great nation and our world position rests in the long run on things more substantial, more important than the momentary propaganda victories of opponents. And while I think that the effects of an early and unilateral withdrawal from Vietnam would be unfortunate and unnecessary, and while I don't favor any such withdrawal, I daresay that 3 or 4 years hence the world would not look quite so different as we think.

Senator Hicklenlooper. I think my time is up, Mr. Kennan, on this first round. It is 11 o'clock. I was just getting warmed up here.

The Chairman. You have a couple of more minutes.

Senator Hicklenlooper. Maybe it will take a couple of minutes to ask questions and then the answer will take more time.

The Chairman. We will recess, I think 20 minutes will be long enough for us to take a vote and reconvene.

There will be two votes.

(Short recess.)

The Chairman. The committee will come to order.

I recognize the Senator from Tennessee, Mr. Gore.

EFFECT OF VIETNAM ON UNITED STATES-RUSSIA RELATIONS

Senator Gore. Ambassador, for reasons which you have stated more eloquently and with more erudition than I have been able to summon, I have long thought this was an unadvisable adventure for the United States. Behind the closed doors of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, a long while ago, I asked this question of Secretary Rusk. I cannot give his reply now, but I would like to ask you the same question today:

Now to view this problem in the context of a decade hence what is your assessment of its bearing upon the possibility that the Soviet Union may or may not continue on the course of rapprochement with the Western Powers which has been underway now since the
confrontation of 1961, thus possibly reentering the European society, or conversely becoming more closely aligned with Red China, not only in a push into the Pacific but aligned more closely in a more aggressive international Communist thrust.

Mr. KENNAN. Senator Gore, a year ago this month in a public lecture at Princeton University, which was one of the two occasions in which I have spoken publicly, I believe, on this Vietnam problem, I tried to make the point that if we pressed our intervention in Vietnam, the Soviet Government would see no choice but to come down strongly against us and to enter into a sort of a competition with the Chinese to see who could look most critical of our policies, most dedicated and violent in their defense of the Vietcong.

I said that they would do this even if it had to proceed at the expense of Soviet-American relations.

Now, this is exactly what has happened. The effect of the Vietnamese conflict is not to restore the unity between the Soviet Union and Communist China. Things have gone too far for that. But it is to give to their rivalry a form very undesirable from the standpoint of our interests and the interests of world peace; namely, the form of a contest to see who can look the most anti-American, the most critical of our policies, who can appear to be the most violent defender of what they call the national liberation movements.

The reasons why the Soviet leaders have seen themselves compelled to move in this direction are ones for which I can take no responsibility. They don't commend themselves to my sympathies. But I can see why they exist, if you try to look at it from their point of view, and this seems to me a most unfortunate development of world affairs generally.

I think that we have more important problems than Vietnam to thrash out eventually with the Soviet Union, problems of disarmament, and problems of the halting of the proliferation of nuclear weaponry, and the still great and vital problem of Germany, which is, to my mind, the most important specific political geographic problem in the world.

All of this, as I see it, is in suspense while this Vietnam conflict proceeds, and the effect of the Vietnam conflict on the Soviet Union has been, I fear, to make it more difficult for us to discuss these things in a useful way with the Soviet leaders.

I am not saying that if the Vietnam conflict did not exist, I am sure that we could have agreements with the Soviet leaders on these points. I think this would take a long time, and a great deal of patience. But I think we should have kept the pressure on, and I think we might make progress slowly. At any rate, that was the way things looked a year or so ago.

Unfortunately, they do not look that way today. I attribute this to the operation of the logic of the situation which we have in South Vietnam.
sibility that Russia would again, seeing us bogged down, press her point of view in Berlin, and seek to work her machinations in Latin America and elsewhere?

Mr. KENNAN. It is certainly within the realm of possibility. One of the things that worries me most about an extension of our present commitment in Vietnam is that it might leave us very poorly prepared to face crises that might arise in other areas of the world. I think it has already caused a diversion of our attention and our resources to a point that holds dangers for the balance of our world responsibilities elsewhere. And if we are now, as some people fear, to double the amount of the manpower and the resources we are putting into Vietnam, I am afraid that we would not be in a good position to defend our interests in other areas if they were suddenly challenged.

Senator Gore. As unwisely as you think these commitments have been made, I remind you that through three administrations we have inched or been inched into this unfortunate situation.

Mr. KENNAN. Yes.

Senator Gore. Upon many occasions the Congress has been led to believe that a subsequent step would not follow a step presently being taken. This is behind us. We are now in Vietnam in the situation which you have so eloquently described.

The real issue, it seems to me, is whether this conflict in Vietnam is to be held within bounds which we think we can reasonably master, maintaining control of events.

You referred this morning to the damage to America's prestige around the world, the pictures of great damage that is wrought. Of course all of us know that war is hell, but the pictures of a great power, with big bombers, big bombs, big money, wreaking havoc upon a small nation is one which we all regret.

Is this element, plus the encroaching threat of China, a benefit to the Chinese Communist apparatus in more effectively regimenting her people and engendering hate of the United States?

Mr. KENNAN. Yes, sir, in my opinion it is.

PREVENT CONFLICT FROM BECOMING WAR WITH CHINA

Senator Gore. Then, you conclude, and I conclude with you that it is in our national interests and in the interest of our national security if at all possible to prevent this conflict from further major escalation and most of all to prevent it from becoming a war between the United States and China.

Mr. KENNAN. This is precisely my position, and I think you have stated it in a way that I couldn't possibly improve upon.

Senator Gore. You have improved in many respects on my thoughts. I agree 100 percent with your presentation here.

Mr. KENNAN. Thank you.

The Chairman. The Senator's time is up.

Senator Carlson?

Senator Carlson. Mr. Ambassador, first I want to express my personal appreciation for your appearance here. You have been in this field of diplomatic problems affecting our international policies for years and, therefore, I have a very high regard for your views.
I would not say I have always agreed with them, but I can assure you I have read many of your books and I have heard many of your lectures.

REFERENCE OF VIETNAM TO UNITED NATIONS

I was interested in the colloquy you had with the Senator from Oregon, Mr. Morse, this morning, and I may not have understood you properly. Did you say you had some question of referring this and the final negotiations to a conclusion by the United Nations?

Mr. KENNAN. What I meant to say, Senator Carlson, was that I did not think that the United Nations constituted, itself, the forum in which could hopefully take place renegotiations which would lead or could lead to a peaceful solution of this problem, but that I thought the United Nations might be instrumental in finding other forums, and stimulating discussion of this problem in other forums, where the discussion would be more hopeful.

REFUSAL OF RUSSIA TO RECONVENE 1954 CONFERENCE

Senator Carlson. Then on that basis, we get, I assume, to the Geneva Conference of 1954. Can you give us any reason or any thoughts why the Soviets have refused to agree to call a reconvening of that conference?

Mr. KENNAN. I am puzzled by this myself. Perhaps the difficulties lie with Hanoi. I do feel that if the pressure were kept on in a suitable way that it would become very difficult for the Soviet Government to continue to hold to that position.

Senator Carlson. Just following that thought, then, in a more general sense, why have the Soviets appeared to be reluctant to play any sort of peacekeeping role similar to the one that they played at Tashkent recently?

Mr. KENNAN. I believe it is because they are being pushed so hard by the Chinese. It is my observation that any Marxist detests being outflanked to the left by any other Marxist.

And they are very sensitive to criticisms that they are “aiding the imperialists,” “doing the work of the imperialists.” This is the sort of silly semantics that goes back and forth between them.

The Soviet Government is, I think, very apprehensive if it does not take a very strong anti-American line, if it appears to be in any way aiding us in our purposes, it will lose its authority within the world Communist movement and its appeal to other nationalist semi-Communist movements in other developing countries. This, I think, explains its rather curious conduct in this respect.

I must say I am bewildered myself at its unwillingness to see the Geneva Conference reconvened.

POSSIBILITY OF SOVIET INTERVENTION IN VIETNAM

Senator Carlson. Following your thoughts along that same line, if we cannot expect any help from the Soviet Union in regard to negotiations on the Geneva Conference of 1954, is it possible that, or is there a likelihood, there might be Soviet intervention in this situation we are in?

Mr. KENNAN. Military intervention?

Mr. Kennan. I see no likelihood of that.

Senator Carlson. I would like to ask you what you base it on in view of the fact that I think everyone must agree this must be settled through negotiations. Maybe it will be years but some day we are going to negotiate a settlement, and the Soviet Union refuses to now. Are they just going to sit idly by and let us continue to waste our manpower, and when I say waste it, it is a poor word to use, but have our young men destroyed and have the financial sacrifices. Is that their thought?

Mr. Kennan. I think it is. I think they probably reckon we have more to lose than they do from the present situation. And they do not want to appear publicly as being in the position of pressuring Hanoi and the Vietcong to agreements with us which these two factions might themselves not wish to enter into.

Senator Carlson. I have some question about the Soviet Union entering militarily into this conflict.

POSSIBILITIES OF CHINESE INTERVENTION IN CONFLICT

What are your thoughts on Chinese intervention?

Mr. Kennan. I think the Chinese, too, obviously would like to stay out of it, and will unless they feel that our military operations are taking forms that become really dangerous to them, either in the straight military sense or in the sense of prestige. I think that if we bomb too freely or if we get operating too close to their borders, it will bring them in.

Now, whether it will bring them in in a formal sense, as I have already said, or whether they will do what they did in Korea and send troops in under the flimsy and shabby excuse that these are volunteers, I couldn't say. I would suspect it might be the latter.

But it doesn't matter much from the standpoint of the problem this presents for us, whether they come as volunteers or as regular Chinese troops.

Senator Carlson. I believe we have had testimony in our committee that the Chinese, at least, have some military advisers and people in Vietnam training the Vietcong, so they are already involved in the war in a way.

Mr. Kennan. Yes.

Senator Carlson. The question as I see it is how much further will they get involved and what is the danger of it, the threat?

Mr. Kennan. Well, I think the danger is that if this goes on, if our involvement increases, and their involvement increases, this can gradually work us into a situation in which we are in conflict with them, in effect, just as this occurred in Korea. But this is in my opinion, and I think in the opinion of people who know more about military matters than I do, an extremely unfortunate terrain for us to become involved in such a conflict on.

Senator Carlson. Admitting that it is an unfortunate terrain in which to be operating militarily, would you agree with General Gavin that their intervention may be within a reasonable time and a short time we will be further involved in Thailand. This is a military matter, but it is a statement he made before this committee the other day.
Mr. Kennan. Yes. I don’t think that I would be able to comment on it. I am not familiar enough with the thinking of our own people or of the situation there.

If I may return a moment to your question about the Soviet Union, and its relationship to the conflict, the Soviet Union, of course, is already giving extensive and, I think, important military aid to the North Vietnamese. I can conceive that that may be increased if the pressure is increased from our side. But I don’t see any likelihood of a formal entry of the Soviet Union to the conflict. I don’t see that that would serve any useful purpose from their standpoint, so I don’t anticipate that they will do that.

Senator Carlson. Well, Mr. Ambassador, I appreciate very much your appearance here this morning.

Mr. Kennan. Thank you.

Senator Carlson. That is all, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman. Senator Lausche!

“Containment” Policy

Senator Lausche. Ambassador Kennan, it has been said frequently that you were the designer and architect of the policy of the United States that we cannot suffer the expansion of communism, and, therefore, there must be adopted a plan of containment. Were you a participant in the design of that plan?

Mr. Kennan. Senator Lausche, I bear a certain amount of guilt for the currency this word “containment” has acquired in this country. I published an article, an anonymous article, in 1947, written actually in 1946, in which this word was used, and the article got much more publicity than I thought it would get. It is true that in this sense I am guilty of the authorship, or at least of the use, of this word with regard to our policy toward the Soviet Union.

Senator Lausche. Right.

Isn’t it a fact that when this policy was announced, it was predicated upon the belief that the security of our country required that there be a stoppage of the aggressive advancement of communism into areas of the world other than those in which it was already prevalent?

Mr. Kennan. Yes, sir. At that time—

Senator Lausche. If that is so, has your view changed then?

Mr. Kennan. No, the situation has changed. There was at that time—

Senator Lausche. Well, if there has been a change in the situation, has your view changed in that it would now be within, let’s say, the general security of our country to permit an expansion of Communist aggression?

Mr. Kennan. It would certainly not be in our interests to encourage it. But I did not mean to convey, in the article I wrote at that time, the belief that we could necessarily stop communism at every point on the world’s surface. There were things I failed to say. I must admit, in that article, which should have been said, and one of them was that certain areas of the world are more important than others; that one had to concentrate on the areas that were vital to us.

But in addition to this, I must point out that at that time there was only one center of Communist power, and it was to this that I was addressing myself.
Today there is more than one, and that makes a great deal of difference.

Senator Lausche. Right.

There is now more than one, and with that I agree. But the nation included now is Red China, and Red China does not believe in peaceful coexistence, but urges the expansion of communism by whatever means are necessary. Do you agree with that?

Mr. Kennan. I agree with that.

Senator Lausche. The split between Red China and Russia has come about because Khrushchev believed in peaceful coexistence, thinking that by ideological combat, communism would be triumphant, but the Chinese did not subscribe to that theory. Is that correct?

Mr. Kennan. I think this could stand as an explanation of one of the reasons for the Russian-Chinese conflict, but by no means all of them.

Senator Lausche. All right.

If China is the real aggressor now, doesn't the policy of containment become more demandable than it was when you announced it back 20 years ago?

Mr. Kennan. Senator Lausche, the policy of containment certainly has relevance to China, but it is a question of what and where and what lies within our resources. If we had been able, without exorbitant cost in American manpower and resources and in the attention of our Government, in the emphasis of our foreign policy, if we had been able to do better in Vietnam I would have been delighted, and I would have thought that the effort was warranted.

SHOULD WE PULL OUT?

Senator Lausche. That brings us down to this plateau. Do you advocate pulling out of Vietnam?

Mr. Kennan. If by that you mean an immediate and sudden and unilateral withdrawal without any sort of a political arrangement and simply permitting to happen what will in that area, I do not advocate it.

Senator Lausche. Under present conditions, you would not advocate pulling out. Would you advocate allowing the people of South Vietnam by open, free elections—supervised either by the United Nations or by an international body so authorized to hold elections—to determine whether they want a Communist government or a government leaning to the free world?

Mr. Kennan. I think it would be very fine if one could have such a test of opinion, but I doubt that it would be possible in the conditions that prevail today.

Senator Lausche. Who stands in the way of it? Does the United States or Red China and Hanoi? Who stands in the way of it? Are not the President and the United States urging that course?

Mr. Kennan. Senator, it seems to me that the whole situation stands in the way of it. You could not have such an election in a civil war situation.

Senator Lausche. All right, if that is your answer, I ask you: Have not the U.S. Government and the people of the United States probed every avenue through which there could be discussion toward
reaching a settlement, and has there not been constant rebuttal of
those efforts by China and by Hanoi?
Mr. KENNAN. It is correct that we have gotten nowhere.
Senator LAUSCHE. All right. Who is to blame if that is the ef-
fect?
Senator Gore. He didn't complete his answer.
Senator LAUSCHE. But he says that it is so—that we have tried.
Who is to be blamed? Is it our Government or is it the Chinese and
the North Vietnamese?
Mr. KENNAN. Perhaps the reasons go deeper than a mere question
of blame on either side. Obviously, it seems to me, the other side
have much more blame for this than we have.
Senator LAUSCHE. Our Government has stopped bombing, it has
stopped fighting. Can you point out to a single act on the part of
the North Vietnamese and Hanoi, which collaborated with this pol-
icy of stopping activities—point out one act of the North Vietnamese
and Red China where they have tried to help toward bringing the
subject to the negotiating table?
Mr. KENNAN. They have shown to my knowledge no interest what-
soever in negotiations at this time.
I must say that I did not expect that they would, and I believe
that I said in the article which was written at the end of November,
before this bombing pause was announced, that I saw no interest on
their side in negotiations and did not think that in the immediate
future they would be interested.
Senator LAUSCHE. All right.
In addition to what the President has done, what would you pro-
pose that we do now to bring this to a settlement without damage to
our prestige and without danger to our security. What would you
propose?
KENNAN PROPOSES LIMITINGAIMS AND COMMITMENT

Mr. KENNAN. I would propose that we limit our aims and our mili-
tary commitment in this area, that we decide what we can safely hold
in that region with due regard to the security of our forces, that we
dig in, and wait and see whether possibilities for a solution do not
open up. I am fully prepared to agree that I do not see the possibil-
ities for a peaceful solution today. But I have seen too many inter-
national situations in which possibilities of this sort were not visible
at one time, but in which they were visible at another time if one
showed a little patience and had a reasonably strong position.
Senator LAUSCHE. There are many, many people who believe that
this is exactly what our Nation is trying to do—the recommendation
that you have just made.
You don't propose pulling out precipitously, then.
Mr. KENNAN. That is correct, Senator.
Senator LAUSCHE. If we do pull out—let's assume that we were
determined to—would that be the end of our troubles, or would we be
confronted with new troubles in Thailand and Burma and Malaysia
and Indonesia and other places?
Mr. KENNAN. I think it is likely that we would certainly be con-
fronted with new troubles because this is a very troubled part of the
world and conditions there generally are not favorable from our standpoint.

Senator Lausche. In other words, the desire of the Communists would not come to an end after a surrender of South Vietnam?

Mr. Kennan. Certainly not their desire, but I think, Senator, that when one speaks of the Communists these days, if it is to be meaningful, one really has to be specific, and state exactly which Communist regime one is talking about.

Senator Lausche. I understand that. There is supposed to be the beneficent Communist Tito, and the tortuous and brutal Communists in Red China—but we are dealing now with Red China, and the question is, What do we do there? I want to advocate pulling out, but I can't bring myself to that conclusion—and you agree with me.

Mr. Kennan. Yes, I think I have indicated my position here.

Senator Lausche. You did, in your paper today, point out the misdeeds of Hanoi and the Vietcong. I appreciate that very much. I think it is wrong to leave the image throughout the world that the Communists have been gentle in this matter, and that we have been the brutal perpetrators. That is not the fact. We tried with all our might to go to the point—in my judgment, practically on the border—of appeasement.

What is the alternative, if you have one, to the course which our Government is now following? I would like to explore the alternatives, and I know the people of the country would like to know.

U.S. GOVERNMENT COURSE UNCLEAR

Mr. Kennan. I am not sure what the course is that our Government is now following. If I knew what it was, if I could see it more clearly, I could speak better perhaps to the question of an alternative to it.

Senator Lausche. All right. I just want to read, the President has urged that we operate under the Geneva Agreements of 1954. Hanoi has rejected that. The President has recommended that we have open free elections in South Vietnam. North Vietnam and many of us, not including myself, claim that South Vietnam would go Communist. Well, if it is, why don't they submit to an election? If they believe that the people will vote Communist, why are they afraid to submit to an open free election?

My time is up, and I thank you very much. I want to say to you that I have implicit faith in your sincerity and your desire to reach this on a sound basis.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Williams?

Senator Williams. Mr. Kennan, as I listened to your statement and your answers to the questions, I gather that you think that during the past 2 or 3 years we have made several mistakes in decisions of our Government policy in Vietnam; is that correct?

Mr. Kennan. I think the totality of our action in this situation, as it has developed over the past few years, has been unfortunate and in error. But I must say that I have great sympathy for our Government. This has not been an easy problem for it to handle, and it has not been easy to find any one place where we could have put the hand to avoid these mistakes.
Senator Williams. Of course, we all recognize that our hindsight is oftentimes better than our foresight.

Mr. Kennan. Yes.

Senator Williams. Had you been in a position of authority at the time, what decisions do you think you would have made that were any different from those that were made?

ALTERNATIVE—NOT PUTTING COMBAT UNITS AShORE

Mr. Kennan. No, I think probably if there was any point where we went wrong it was in putting fighting men ashore for purposes of combat. Possibly even the instructors for the South Vietnamese forces were warranted by the situation. It is difficult for me as an outsider far away to tell. But perhaps we should have thought much more carefully before we put combat units ashore.

It has been my belief for many years, and it is a belief based on the fact that I had at one time to make a very careful study of our difficulties in connection with the intervention in Russia in 1918, it has been my belief that one should be very, very careful about ever putting American forces ashore into a situation of this sort unless one can see clearly how and at what point one can get them out again, and unless the arrival at that point appears fairly plausible and immediate. Here, if at any point, is where we made our mistake.

Senator Williams. We all have the same objectives as Americans—wanting a peaceful solution to the problem—and we recognize we are at this point now, whether we arrived there because of proper decisions or because of mistakes.

Recognizing that we are at this point, that we have a couple of hundred thousand men in there, my next question is, What would you recommend that we do now?

Mr. Kennan. I would recommend that we not expand either our own commitment of men and resources to this conflict; that we try to limit the conflict rather than to expand it; that we adopt in general a defensive strategy and put ourselves in a position where we cannot be hurried, where we cannot be panicked, where we can afford to wait, and let the logic of this situation then gradually sink in on our opponents. And I think then there is a possibility that with a little greater patience than we have shown thus far, possibilities for an acceptable resolution of the conflict may open up. By an acceptable resolution of it, I do not say that this will be one which will hold any triumphs or indeed any great satisfaction from our standpoint.

NO HAPPY SOLUTION

I think that there is no happy way out of this conflict. I think the best we can expect is that it be resolved in a manner which does not shake the stability of the area too much, and which permits us to extricate ourselves with a reasonable degree of good grace and retained prestige.

Senator Williams. When you speak of digging in and holding what we have, you never know what the other side is going to do, and they may increase in numbers.

What would you do then? Would you retreat, withdraw or add more men?
Mr. KENNAN. This involves military considerations to which I am not competent to speak. But I must say that I do find it hard to understand that our Government does not have it within its power, that our forces that we have out there today do not have it within their power, to hold some areas of this country in a secure way.

I note that the Vietcong—that is the Vietcong and their North Vietnamese helpers—having approximately, I suppose, the same number, about the same number of forces, are said to control completely 25 percent of the country. Now if they can do that with about the same number, it is hard for me to understand why there is nothing that we could hold with our present forces there.

I don't know enough about military matters to say how this should be done. Perhaps you would have to have forward sweeps occasionally. Perhaps it couldn't be just a state of siege. But it does seem to me that it should not be beyond the power of ingenuity to find a way in which the formidable forces which we now have in that country could settle down to a more or less defensive strategy for the coming period, and could create a situation in which nobody else could hope to dislodge us.

If they cannot hope to dislodge us at some point in the future they will have to talk to us because otherwise they won't get us out.

Senator WILLIAMS. Do you think that there is a possibility that such a holding action could actually become more costly—in dollars, material, and lives—than would offensive action?

Mr. KENNAN. I have heard it argued that it could—again this is a military question—but I cannot imagine that what it might cost in lives and effort could be more than what could possibly be involved if we continue to go on into what appears to be an unlimited escalation of this conflict into an unlimited area. Because this is almost infinity in its possibilities, as related to our resources.

Senator WILLIAMS. That is all Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Church?

Senator CHURCH. Mr. Ambassador, I have been very much impressed by the eloquence and profundity of the testimony you are making today. I suppose, most of all, I like your courage, particularly in these days when criticism of American policy is often met with charges of appeasement or allegations of being soft on communism or sold on surrender or some such abuse.

Your own record in our diplomatic service alone should demonstrate how strongly you have opposed communism, and how great was your contribution in devising a prudent policy in Europe designed to bring and end to Russian aggression there.

My questions won't relate to Vietnam as such. I think that what has been done there cannot be readily undone. The options now open to the President are limited, and I am confident that the President is striving to keep this war confined within manageable limits. He certainly has indicated his sincere desire to bring about a political settlement that will restore peace to southeast Asia.

Rather, I would like to question you about some of the underlying premises which led us into Vietnam in the first place, and which could, if they remain unchanged, lead us into other guerrilla wars, indeed, into an endless succession of guerrilla wars in the future.
I think, to get this point clearly made on the record, we should compare the policies you advocated in Europe with the situation that confronts us in Asia, which has just thrown off European rule.

Now, isn’t it true that in Europe, following the Second World War, we were faced with a problem of Russian aggression, with the Red army in occupation and control of much of Eastern Europe?

Mr. KENNAN. This is correct.

Senator CHURCH. And, at that time, Russian aggression and Communist aggression seemed to be synonymous, did they not?

Mr. KENNAN. Exactly.

Senator CHURCH. And isn’t it true that the NATO Alliance was designed to put a stop to Russian aggression, that is to say, the Russian movement of the Iron Curtain westward across the face of Europe?

Mr. KENNAN. That is absolutely correct, and it was designed especially to protect from further Communist expansion the vitally important industrial areas of the Rhineland and contiguous regions, which are among the most important in the world.

Senator CHURCH. We felt, did we not, that if the Russian movement westward across Europe were not stopped, then the balance of power in the world would shift from our favor to the Russian favor?

Mr. KENNAN. This is absolutely correct.

Senator CHURCH. Now, the NATO defense line didn’t stifle communism, that is to say, there are still Communist Parties existing behind the NATO defense line, the largest political party in Italy is Communist, and a very formidable Communist Party exists today in France, isn’t that right?

Mr. KENNAN. That is correct.

Senator CHURCH. And the reason that we don’t have, behind the NATO defense line, guerrilla wars in Western Europe, or so-called wars of national liberation in Western Europe, is because the economies there have revived, there is internal cohesion, there is strong majority support for democratic institutions in these countries. Isn’t that the reason that communism has not come to prevail behind the NATO defense line in Western Europe?

Mr. KENNAN. Absolutely, and if I may add, also the fact that the peoples of those countries were willing to pick up and shoulder the burden of the load. They didn’t look to an outside force to do the main job.

Senator CHURCH. In other words, we were able to join with them in a genuine collective defense.

Mr. KENNAN. Correct.

Senator CHURCH. Isn’t it also true that when we intervened militarily in Europe, we intervened in a region where we shared with the Europeans a common culture, and a common civilization, and commonly held attitudes against communism?

Mr. KENNAN. This is absolutely right.

Senator CHURCH. Now, I think we have made no mistake so fundamental in American foreign policy than concluding that a design that was suitable for Europe would also be suitable for those regions of the world that have just thrust off European rule. We have failed
to take into account how very different the underlying situation is in Asia and in Africa, in the ex-colonial regions of the world.

Would you agree with that?

POLICY TOWARD EUROPE NOT EFFECTIVE IN ASIA

Mr. Kennan. I couldn’t be more strongly in agreement. At the time when the containment policy with relation to Europe was being thrashed out in a practical way, and that was the time when the Marshall plan was devised, we, in the policy planning staff of the Department of State, who had something to do with the Marshall plan, were pressed repeatedly, and sometimes by people here in Congress, to produce a similar plan for China, and for Asia; and we always resisted this, precisely for the reasons you have given, not because we did not want to see communism contained in Asia, but because we felt that the devices that were effective in Europe would not necessarily be effective here.

Senator Church. May I suggest here that we just briefly review the basic conditions in Asia to contrast them with what we had to work with in Europe?

Isn’t it true that in Asia and in Africa we have governments that are very unstable, having just been newly established, that we have popular aspirations for a better life that often outrun, by a considerable distance, the capacity of the new governments to fulfill. We have, in addition, a situation quite different with respect to popular attitudes toward communism, that is to say, would it be your judgment that, in these areas of the world, the people may be less concerned or less fearful or less opposed to communism, as such, than they are to imperialism or colonialism, which they have experienced for two centuries and which, with great sacrifice and oftentimes with great struggle, they have finally overthrown?

Mr. Kennan. Oh, yes.

The power of these various semantic symbols is entirely different in Asia than it is in Europe. And not only that, but the Europeans have things to lose by communism, by a Communist form of rule, which the Asians are not conscious of having to lose.

ASIANS DON’T SHARE OUR SENSE OF FREEDOM

Senator Church. They have freedom to lose, do they not, Mr. Ambassador?

Mr. Kennan. Precisely.

Senator Church. Is there freedom, as we know freedom, in most of the countries of Asia and Africa today?

Mr. Kennan. There is not. I recall reading only 2 days ago an article by one of our greatest authorities in this country on Chinese culture, in which he pointed out that the Chinese language has only one word which remotely resembles our word freedom, and that conveys the sense of license, of rather turbulent indiscipline.

The Chairman. Who was that?

Mr. Kennan. John Fairbanks.

Senator Church. Now, in these countries which are mostly totalitarian, although we always include them in that phrase we use con-
stantly, the “Free World,” isn’t it true that change, if it is to come at all, will often have to come through violence, that is to say, through revolution, rather than through the process of free elections?

Mr. KENNAN. I am sure that this is inevitable in large parts of the world.

Senator CHURCH. Because most of these countries are simply not democratic enough to allow for peaceful change.

Mr. KENNAN. No.

Senator CHURCH. For a free and unviolent way to achieve change, isn’t that so?

Mr. KENNAN. Senator Church, the free elections presuppose a certain state of mind in great masses of people.

We had the same problem again in the Russian intervention. Woodrow Wilson and other people hoped there might be some sort of elections in Russia; and they couldn’t understand that this was a country so torn by violence, by terror, by fear, by the miserable experiences of the past, that no Russian would ever have trusted another Russian to open the ballots and read them fairly.

NEED FOR NEW POLICY IN UNDERDEVELOPED WORLD

Senator CHURCH. Then, Mr. Ambassador, apart from what happens in Vietnam—and you and I both hope that the best possible solution can be achieved there for our country—but apart from what happens in Vietnam, aren’t we going to be facing a situation in this vast region of the undeveloped world fairly beset by revolutions for many years to come?

Mr. KENNAN. Yes. By violence of all sorts, I think.

Senator CHURCH. And don’t you think, then, that we have to begin to devise a new policy for Asia and Africa?

Mr. KENNAN. Yes.

Senator CHURCH. One not based upon the fixed concepts which were suitable for Europe, but designed to cope with the phenomena of revolution in the newly developing parts of the world?

Mr. KENNAN. I do, indeed.

Senator CHURCH. Do you think we have yet begun to develop that new policy?

Mr. KENNAN. No, I don’t; and I think we find ourselves hampered in that by the slogans and the semantic symbols of the past. I wish we could drop all these things and look at these situations realistically. I think we could perhaps devise an approach to these problems, let’s say, rather than a policy, which would be much more effective than the sort of talking we have been doing among ourselves in recent years.

Senator CHURCH. My time is up, Mr. Ambassador, but I just merely want to say that I agree with you. I think we are prisoners of the past, that we must break out of this old bondage if we are to fashion a policy that will effectively advance American interests in the volatile ex-colonial regions of the world.

Mr. KENNAN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Senator CLARK. Mr. Chairman, I would like to offer for the record a speech made by Mr. Kennan at Princeton University on February 25,
THE UNITED STATES AND THE COMMUNIST GIANTS

(By Hon. George F. Kennan, Walter E. Edge Lecture, Princeton University, Feb. 25, 1966)

When the invitation to deliver this lecture reached me, some months ago, and I was obliged, according to established custom, to select a title for a lecture I had not yet even thought about, the one selected was the one you see on the program this evening: "The United States and the Communist Giants." What I had in mind, in selecting this title, was a relatively detached and relaxed discourse on the nature of the three great powers: Russia, China, and the United States, at this historical juncture, an examination of their respective ideologies and the compulsions that most strongly affect their governments, and perhaps the broaching of some speculative thoughts about how they all related to one another. Little did I realize that by the time the day for delivery of this lecture came around, the Vietnam situation would have brought precisely these relationships to such a state of cruciality as to make them a burning topic of the hour, and would threaten, in fact, to predetermine at any moment, perhaps even beyond the point of no return, the answers to the very questions I had thought to discuss. Things being this way, I hope you will forgive me if I dispense with all the customary academic and forensic preliminaries and proceed at once to the burden of the thesis I have to present.

I want first to ask you to note certain things about the nature and position, at this time, of our two major Communist adversaries. Let me take first the Soviet Union and recall to your minds certain features of this great political society which affect importantly its interests and reactions as a power on the world scene.

First of all, the Soviet regime is a Marxist regime which has now been in power for 47 years, and which has carried its country, during this period, to a fairly advanced, if rather uneven, state of industrial development. One of the things this means is that the weaknesses and contradictions of the Marxist doctrine have now had time to become not only visible but even embarrassingly evident in the experience of the Soviet State. Not only have they had time to become thus evident, but that relative state of industrial advancement to which the Soviet Union has now attained has made these weaknesses and contradictions all the more conspicuous; for insofar as Marxism, or even Marxism-Leninism, still has any relevance in our age, this relevance would be primarily, I should think, to the problems of societies in the same incipient stage of industrialization as was the Germany of Marx' time, or the Russia of Lenin's--societies in which the great problem was still that of the distribution of a scarce wealth among individuals, not the social employment of an abundant wealth to the benefit of an entire people. Aside from the fact that the Marxist doctrine has proved wholly inadequate as an approach to the problems of Russian agriculture, even its achievements in respect to the raising of the living standards of the so-called masses (a function which lay, after all, at the very basis of its claim to superiority as a social and political doctrine) compare unfavorably with those of the hated and despised free enterprise system of the West. All this means not only that the Soviet regime now faces very difficult decisions of domestic policy, in the effort to reconcile its Marxist principles to the demands of an advanced industrial society, but that it cannot easily refrain from looking westward both for trade and ideas. Outside the field of agriculture, where the Russians have a very specific problem partly inherited from the past, Russia's present problems and needs, economic and social, are much more similar to those of the advanced nations of the West than to those of the underdeveloped societies in which Moscow is politically so interested.

Second, Russia, looking back on these 47 years, faces a serious crisis of conscience arising out of the historic phenomena of Stalinism and the role it played in the development of Soviet society. This is more than an academic problem; it has serious implications for policy today. The regime is in a difficult situation. It cannot fully condone the excesses of Stalinism without estranging vitally important segments of Soviet society, notably the intellectuals...
and even certain echelons of the party membership, to whom the memories of Stalinism are humiliating and intolerable. But it also cannot fully condemn Stalinism, either; because to do so would be to destroy the myth of the party's infallibility and thus to provide justification for past movements of internal party opposition, as well as for present and future ones. This would mean opening the party to a process of real democratization. But anything of this sort would involve the forfeiture of that monopolization of power in the name of an allegedly infallible party which has endured since Lenin's days; and for this, the present leaders are wholly unprepared. Out of this dilemma have come serious divisions of educated and authoritative opinion within Soviet society, notably between those who are affected by shame and doubt over the memory of Stalinism, and those who are more affected by anxiety over what would occur should the principles of Stalinism be entirely abandoned. And it is clear that the first of these attitudes—that of the people who cannot stomach the memory of Stalinism—is now associated with a general inability to tolerate the Stalinist pattern of intellectual regimentation. One has to do here with the breakthrough of a new curiosity, powerful and insistent: curiosity about the West, about Russia's own past, about all those areas of reality concerning which the regime has tried in the past to maintain artificial, rigid, and often preposterous official myths. People who have this curiosity turn naturally to the West for its satisfaction. Where else could they turn? It is not that they are enthused over Western values and examples; very often they dislike these and reject them. But they want to know, nevertheless, about Western ideas and conditions; for they find them relevant to their own problems.

A similar influence, we ought to note, is brought to bear on the Soviet leaders by the Eastern European Communist regimes and the European Communist Parties in general. Not only would important elements in these regimes and parties be quite unwilling to see a complete return to Stalinism in the Soviet Union, but to them, too, it is important that intellectual, cultural, and economic contacts be furthered between the Communist countries and the West. Should the Moscow leaders go too far in the direction of a return to Stalinist internal practices, and should they, in particular, try to reimpose the Stalinist system of complete isolation from the West, they would run the risk of alienating these other regimes and parties to a degree which, particularly in the face of the existing disarray in the Communist world, could be very serious indeed.

Returning to the situation within Russia proper, we should not forget that all these divisive tendencies operate within a political system which has important constitutional defects. I cannot take time to describe these defects in detail. They lie largely in the clumsy arrangement of parallel bureaucracies of party and government, and above all in the fact that reasonable provision for the allotment and transfer of supreme personal power exists only in the constitution of the governmental apparatus, where power does not really reside, whereas the constitution of the party, where power does reside, affords no such arrangements and makes provision only for collective leadership. I assure you: these are dangerously imperfect arrangements for a great modern society. Their imperfection was concealed in earlier years only because the powerful personalities of Lenin and Stalin and, to a certain degree Khrushchev, were able to transcend them. In the absence of such personalities, they could easily lead at any time to serious troubles. Their importance is already such that the regime is unable to reconcile, on any basis other than that of delicate compromise, the deep division of outlook and opinion that now exists.

Now one more thing. The greatest results the Soviet Government has to show for all the sacrifices and sufferings it has required of the Soviet peoples over these 47 years are to be found in the industries, the cities, the physical installations it has constructed. The standard of living of the people and the power of the regime itself, are dependent on the continued existence and functioning of all this new plant and infrastructure. A nuclear war that resulted in the large-scale destruction of these things could wipe out at one blow the entire achievements of 47 years of Soviet socialism. Added to this, we have the fact that the Russian people have only the most horrible memories of past wars. Nobody in Russia wants another major war; and the regime has gone very far in assuring the people that it will not start one. All this means that not only does the Soviet regime have every conceivable selfish reason to wish to see a major war avoided, but it has committed itself seriously before its own people, much more seriously than is generally realized in our country, to do all in its power to avoid one.
For all these reasons, the Soviet leaders need both peace and reasonably good relations with Western countries, including outstandingly the United States. Not only do they need these things, but they can see, when they look westward alone, no compelling reason why it should not be possible to have them. The great outstanding problems in Russia's relations with the West are those of Germany and nuclear armaments. In both fields, the difficulties are obviously very great; but the respective positions are not logically irreconcilable, and eventual agreement seems not to be beyond the limits of possibility. Thus the attraction of better relations with the United States, as a force operating on the Soviet leadership, is not only something founded in the deeper requirements of Soviet society and in the self-interest of the regime, but is buttressed by the fact that its realization is theoretically conceivable, even in terms of the present situation.

On the other hand, Moscow is plainly faced today with Chinese pressures of the heaviest possible sort which run in precisely the opposite direction: which not only demand an immediate deterioration in Russia's relations with the West but obviously have as their concealed aim the provocation of actual hostilities between Russia and the West at the earliest possible moment. The Soviet leaders are well aware of this. They understand its dangers. They propose, I am sure, to resist those pressures to the best of their ability. But there is one area of world affairs where Moscow is extremely vulnerable, where the Chinese have important tactical advantages, and where the Soviet leaders can be, and are being, pressed constantly into positions and actions that compromise their relations with the United States in particular. This is the area of the so-called anti-imperialist movement. What is involved here is the question of leadership among the various anti-Western and anti-American political forces now competing for ascendancy in the newer or less developed countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. To the extent these conflicts, these so-called anti-imperialist struggles, are highlighted before world opinion; to the extent they engage the attention of the great powers and become theaters and testing grounds of great-power rivalries; to the extent that it becomes impossible for the Soviet Union to ignore or remain aloof from them—Moscow sees no choice but to come down strongly on the anti-Western side, even at the cost of damage to its relations with leading Western countries.

One may well ask why this should be so—what importance these new countries have for Moscow that could justify so costly a reaction. I can give you only a partial answer, because I myself believe this reaction to be exaggerated, oversensitive, and not fully warranted even by the political self-interest of the Soviet regime. Nevertheless, to a certain extent one can see and understand, if not approve, its rationale.

In Europe and North America the Communist movement, as a dynamic advancing political force, is dead. If it has a future anywhere, it is in these developing areas and particularly in the new states, where firm political traditions and institutions have not yet formed; and here the possibilities, from Moscow's standpoint, lie less in the prospect of creating real Communist systems—for this, the prerequisites are lacking—than in the possibility of dominant influence being exerted from some Communist center over these inexperienced regimes, of their being developed as instruments of major Communist policy in the game of international politics. Moscow believes—Moscow is almost obliged by doctrinal conviction to believe—that these anti-Western forces, euphonistically referred to as the anti-imperialist ones, are bound to be generally successful, politically, on the local scene, at least in the struggle against Western influences; and noting the fumbling, ineffective quality of our own responses, I must say I think they have some reason for this belief. Insofar as it is we Americans who are primarily involved at the Western end. The great question, in their view, is: Whichever Communist center is to preside over these various victories and to reap the various fruits. To abandon this field of political contest, or even to neglect it, means, as they see it, to present it on a silver platter to the Chinese. For this, they are not prepared. Their foreign relations operate in three great areas: the world Communist movement, the underdeveloped and new nations, and the Western World. In the Communist movement, their position is already under heavy and effective Chinese attack. Their relations with the West, while valuable to them, cannot, at this historical juncture at any rate, be expected to carry the entire burden of their international position. A Soviet foreign policy based exclusively on relations with the West would practically undermine the rationale for the maintenance of Soviet power in Russia itself. Aside, therefore, from
the fact that they regard their governments of the new nations as their natural and traditional clients, the Soviet leaders cannot afford, for wider reasons, to stand aside from the struggle for predominance over them. Any such passivity could easily be made to look like indifference to the prospering of the Communist cause generally and would at once be exploited by the Chinese as a means of discrediting Soviet policy, and completing the destruction of Moscow's influence and leadership in the world Communist movement. And beyond that, it would risk the loss of access to this entire theater of international politics, where a continued Soviet presence could alone make the difference between effective Soviet participation in world affairs and a total and ruinous isolation.

In summary, then, we have before us, in the person of the Soviet leadership, a regime enmeshed in a veritable welter of contradictions and problems, internal and external; torn by conflicting compulsions; it is unable to resolve or to contain except by the most delicate sort of political compromise; profoundly in need of peace; subject to strong compulsions toward better relations with the West; yet conscious of having an extremely sensitive flank in Asia and Africa which it can protect only at the expense of its relations with the West; walking a very narrow tightrope among these conflicting pressures: vacillating, weaving this way and that; responsive to the shifts in the world scene; its behavior, for this reason, in part the product of the way we ourselves play our hand and in the sense susceptible in some degree to our influence.

Compare this now with what we have before us when we look to the regime in Peiping. Here is a political entity still young to the experience of power. The country it controls is still in an early stage of industrial development. The directing of the Chinese economy by the regime still proceeds in an atmosphere analogous to that which existed in Russia in the early period of the so-called war communism. Primarily concerned, still, with the destruction of every form of opposition to itself, intellectual or spiritual, conscious or subconscious, the Peiping regime requires not war itself, in the physical sense, but the atmosphere of war: a state of tension and of alleged external danger, by which alone this sort of pressure can be justified. So much is the country still involved in the social upheaval occasioned by the transition to a Communist system that the contradictions of the Marxist ideology, as a blueprint for the administration of an advanced economy, have not yet had time to become fully apparent.

By the same token, Communist China has as yet no body of physical achievement comparable to that of Soviet Russia: no great fund of new industrial and urban and technological construction to be placed in jeopardy and to constitute a vulnerability in the case of nuclear war. Those interpretations which see Peiping as quite indifferent to nuclear destruction are certainly exaggerated: but the Chinese vulnerability to this kind of destruction is definitely less, and the apprehensions of its leaders presumably that much smaller, than in the case of the Soviet Union.

If there are imperfections in the constitutional setup of the Chinese Communists, which is quite possible, these are so to speak still inoperable and invisible behind the dominating personality of a single great revolutionary leader. And while Mao's regime, to be sure, yields little to that of Stalin in the rigorosity of its political and intellectual discipline, its authority has never assumed those truly pathological and nightmarish forms which characterized that of Stalin after 1934. For this and other reasons, the Peiping regime faces no such crisis as that which rakes Soviet officialdom and the Soviet intellectual world. I am sure there is plenty of curiosity among the Chinese about foreigners and about the world outside. But one sees no evidence of anything comparable to that combination of compelling doubt and curiosity—doubt about one's own revolutionary past and curiosity about the outside world which now so consumes the young people and the intellectuals of Russia. Here, national differences surely play an important part. The Russians have, traditionally, a species of love-hate complex toward the West. They feel obliged to react in many ways against the West; but it is absolutely essential to them that it be there to be reacted to. It is something to which they have to relate themselves, whether sympathetically or antagonistically. It would be hard, I think, for them to conceive of a world without it. I see no evidence of anything quite comparable to this in China. China developed, over the centuries, as a far more self-sufficient civilization than did Russia. The decisive phase in Russia's Intellectual and cultural development occurred in the 18th and 19th centuries, and it proceeded in close association with similar developments in the West. In China, this appears to be true only
in small measure; and there is abundant evidence that the shaking off of Western patterns and modes of thought, which Communist power has everywhere involved and demanded, has been far more drastic and effective in China than in the Soviet Union.

For all these reasons, we find in the case of China nothing comparable to those compulsions and interests that determine both Russia's need for peace and her need for better relations with Western countries. I do not doubt that over the long run the Chinese Communists, too, will experience a stronger sense of need for both these things. But as of today they have other and more urgent concerns.

Particularly is this true when it comes to relations with the United States. It must surely be apparent to the Chinese Communist leaders that better relations with this country would be conceivable, in present circumstances, only if they were to relinquish their demand for liquidation of the Chiang regime and for the total inclusion of Formosa into their political system. But so violent and insistent have been their pretentions in this respect that the abandonment of them would involve serious loss of prestige. Yet to them, prestige is of enormous importance, both for traditional psychological reasons and because it has to compensate for their relative military weakness: their deficiency, that is, in advanced forms of weaponry, their lack of amphibious power. Similar considerations present themselves, of course, with regard to Korea and Vietnam, not to mention Japan. In fact of the two places does Peiping have any idea of recognizing the legitimacy of the American presence; and the concessions it would have to make to stand any chance of real accommodation with the United States over these issues are ones quite irreconcilable, as things stand today, with that image of itself as the over-riding, inspiring and organizing power of the eastern world which Peiping has so insistently cultivated and around which it has constructed the edifice of its international pretentions and ambitions.

Not only do the Chinese view accommodation with the United States as something conceivable purchase—only at an exorbitant price, but they see—I feel sure—no present necessity of paying price at all. The wickets on which they are today standing, which are those of incitement of distrust of American influence and hatred of the American presence among the populations locally affected, are not bad wickets. They are not very effective, thus far, in Japan and Formosa; but this too, could change. Meanwhile, they are extremely effective in Vietnam; and if they yield there the success they are expected to yield, their effectiveness will certainly increase in other areas. Peiping not only sees at the moment little to be gained by accommodation with us, but sees a large deal to be gained, particularly from the standpoint of its own prestige, by the continuation of sharpest, most ruthless and unscrupulous sort of political attack against us. It may be true that this situation is partly the result of our own mistakes. There may be things we can do over the long run to alter it. There is very little we can do to alter it in the short term.

Now Communist China obviously has a compelling need for foreign capital on a vast scale, as a means to its own industrialization. Such assistance is, in fact, practically indispensable to any early realization of the dreams and plans of the regime. In this respect does Peiping have any idea of recognizing the legitimacy of the American presence; and the concessions it would have to make to stand any chance of real accommodation with the United States over these issues are ones quite irreconcilable, as things stand today, with that image of itself as the over-riding, inspiring and organizing power of the eastern world which Peiping has so insistently cultivated and around which it has constructed the edifice of its international pretentions and ambitions.

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is not the only way we can live. We have other possibilities. You may not be in a position to arrange your affairs with the West, and for this reason you may be dependent on us, but we are quite able to arrange our affairs with the West, and we are not dependent on you.

This explains, of course, the almost desperate intensity of the Chinese attack on the theory of coexistence, of the Chinese determination to disrupt Russia's relations with this country. For only if these relations can be disrupted; only if this alternative can be destroyed, can Russia be put into a position where it has no choice but to give Peiping what it wants, on Peiping's terms.

So much, then, for the Chinese position. Now let us try to take stock of these circumstances from the standpoint of U.S. interests.

We are confronted here with two great Communist powers. The attitude and behavior of the one; namely, the Chinese, with respect to ourselves is pretty well determined and predictable, at least for the immediate future. There is little we can do to influence it. The attitude and behavior of the other is still a variable, susceptible at least in part to influence by ourselves.

Two possibilities now present themselves. One is that our relationship with Moscow deteriorates; that Moscow, as a consequence, finds it necessary to hold more closely to Peiping, in order to compensate for the loss of its Western card; that Moscow then throws itself even more frantically and, having little to lose, even more recklessly and wholeheartedly, into the anti-imperialist struggle, heedless of the effect on Soviet-American relations, coming to regard as its major objective not the preservation of an effective balance between the Chinese and ourselves as factors in Russia's external situation, but rather: successful competition with the Chinese for leadership in the political struggle for our destruction. This alternative would not satisfy in all respects Chinese desiderata, for the Chinese-Soviet rivalry would continue to be operable in many forms. But it represents in general the direction in which the Chinese, as well as many neo-Stalinists in the Soviet Union would like to see Soviet policy move. It would militate for increased unity throughout the Communist bloc as well as for sharper and more uncompromising tactics toward the West. It would compound the effectiveness of the forces now marshaled against it. It is difficult to see what ultimate conclusion it could have other than a world war.

The other possibility is, of course, a continued improvement of Russia's relations with ourselves. This is one that would strengthen the hands of both powers with relation to the Chinese—the Russian hand, because the value of the Soviet alternative to the acceptance of Chinese pressures would be enhanced; our own hand, because the intensity of the forces ranged against us would be reduced and because Soviet interests might even work in many ways to reinforce our own position.

In drawing the picture of these alternatives, I should like to avoid the impression that they are absolutes. There is nothing I can conceive of, short of a world war, which could throw the Russians entirely into the Chinese camp. Conversely, any improvement in Russia's relations with the West should not be expected to go so far as to produce any total break with Peiping. What I am talking about here are tendencies rather than finalities; but they are tendencies of great importance, and the fact that neither would be likely to be carried to a point of absolute finality does not obviate the enormous significance that attaches to the choice between them.

We should recall at this point that the present unhappy state of our relations with China, hopelessly anchored as it appears to be in the circumstances of the moment, should not and must not be regarded as a final and permanent state of affairs. The Chinese are one of the world's great peoples, intelligent and industrious, endowed with enormous civilizing power and with formidable talents cultural and otherwise. It is wholly unnatural that the relations between such a people and our own should be as they are today. Dismal as are the immediate prospects, we must look forward to the day when we come to terms in some way with the prevailing political forces on the Chinese mainland. This, however, like any other adjustment of international relations, will take bargaining and compromise; and if the final relationship is to be a sound one and to bear weight, both sides must have a reasonable bargaining power when they finally sit down to accommodate their differences. Only if the Soviet Union is kept in the running as an independent force in world affairs, enjoying and valuing a constructive relationship with the West and thus being not solely dependent on the Chinese connection and not helpless in the face of Chinese demands—only if these conditions prevail will we have a chance of working out
our long-term relationship to China on a basis reasonably satisfactory to ourselves. A well-ordered relationship with Moscow is in other words essential to the constructive and healthy adjustment of our long-term relations with China. If in place of the preservation and encouragement of Russia's independent role, we force the Russians back into a closer relation with the Chinese, we will not only intensify the effectiveness of the forces ranged against us at this particular moment, but we will complicate greatly, and not to our own advantage, the problem of the eventual composition of our differences with both the Russians and the Chinese.

If this view be accepted, it becomes, as you see, an urgent requirement of American policy to ease in every proper and constructive way the relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States. This has nothing to do with famous one-sided concessions, designed to win gratitude on the Soviet side. As one of my Foreign Service colleagues used to say, you can't bank goodwill in Moscow; and I would be the last to advocate anything of that sort. But what you can do is to hold out to Moscow a plausible prospect of accommodation in those issues that are theoretically susceptible of solution in this way, and avoid the accenting of those that are not. This, as I see it, means serious effort on our part to provide a reasonable basis for accommodation in the great issues of Germany and of nuclear weapons control—in those issues, in other words, that affect primary the European theater and are central problems of Russia's relationship with the West; and at the same time to de-emphasize wherever possible conflicts that fall under the Communist category of the anti-imperialist struggle, conflicts in the face of which Moscow, when its hand is forced, is bound to come down formally on the anti-American, if not the pro-Chinese side.

It does not appear to me that American policy of recent years stacks up very well in relation to this requirement. I have not seen the evidence that we have done all we could do to find agreement with the Soviet Union in matters of Germany and disarmament. Needless irritations, such as the captive nations resolution and various antiquated trade restrictions, are still permitted to impede the development of Soviet-American relations. And our present involvement in Vietnam is a classic example of the sort of situation we ought to avoid if we do not wish to provoke in Moscow precisely those reactions that are most adverse to our interests. It is largely as a consequence of these strategic errors that we find ourselves in the dangerous and unpromising position we occupy today.

It will be asked, of course, particularly in connection with the problem we now have on our hands in Vietnam, what else we could do than what we have done in situations of this sort. We cannot, it will be argued, simply walk away and fold our hands and watch such countries slide irrevocably into the Communist orbit. I would be the last to generalize about such situations, or to suggest that a hands-off policy is everywhere possible and desirable. But there is one thing we might usefully bear in mind. The surest way to invite a strong and effective Communist involvement in situations of this nature is to involve ourselves heavily, particularly in a military way. Where we lay off, the road may be open, ostensibly, to Communist intrigue and penetration—it is usually open, no matter what we do—and there may well be takeovers by political forces that make a pretense of Marxist conviction and look to Moscow or Peking for economic aid and political support. But this is not always so intolerable to our interests as we commonly suppose. The less we are in the picture, the less is there any excuse for actual military intervention on the part of the Communist powers, and the greater are the chances for rivalry between Moscow and Peking for political predominance in the region concerned. But in the absence of a Communist military presence, and where the Chinese-Soviet rivalry exists, the local regimes, whether nominally Communist or otherwise, are almost bound to begin to act independently in many ways—to develop, in other words, Titoist tendencies. And this is not always the worst solution, from our standpoint. It is harder for either Moscow or Peking to interfere extensively with a regime that calls itself Communist than with one that does not. And since we have not engaged our prestige extensively, the situation affords to the Communist powers no such opportunities for political gains at our expense as those the Chinese and North Vietnamese Communists are now reaping in Vietnam.

I can think of nothing we need more, at this stage, than a readiness to relax, not to worry so much about these remote countries scattered across the southern crescent, to let them go their own way, not to regard their fate as our exclusive responsibility, to wait for them to come to us rather than our...
fussing continually over them. The more we exert ourselves to protect them from communism, the less the exertion they are going to undertake themselves. We are not, after all, their keepers. They have in general much more to demand than they have to give. And others, even the Communists, are not apt to derive much more profit than we or former mother countries have derived in the past from the effort to keep them.

In the complexities of our international situation, the hour is late and the difficulties enormous. But it seems to me that I now detect in many quarters in this country voices inspired by an increasing awareness of the realities I have been discussing. It is still not too late to turn events in a more hopeful direction. If we will bear these overriding strategic considerations in mind—if we will be concerned to reduce to a minimum our existing conflicts with the Soviet Union and to extract ourselves at the earliest possible moment from involvements which leave that power no choice but to join Peking in opposing us—if, in other words, we will opt for one great Communist opponent at this historical juncture rather than two, then I am hopeful that peace can be preserved; and I can see the possibility of international life beginning to move in that alone can ever be my own fondest dream and which I think should be a basic objective of American foreign policy, which is the eventual constructive ordering of our relations with both of these two great peoples now under Communist control, to whom we have so much to give, and from whom we have so much to receive.

Senator Clark. I would also like to have an article published under Mr. Kennan's signature in the Washington Post on December 12, 1965, entitled "Our Push-Pull Dilemma in Vietnam."

The Chairman. Without objection so ordered.

(From the Washington Post, Dec. 12, 1965)

OUR PUSH-PULL DILEMMA IN VIETNAM—AN AUTHORITY ON COMMUNISM SAYS WE'RE LETTING THIS ONE AREA DISBALANCE WHOLE POLICY

(By George F. Kennan, former Ambassador to the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, an authority on world communism)

There are, I am sure, many besides myself who would have preferred to remain silent in the face of a discussion so shrill and so confused as that which has resolved around the Vietnam problem in recent months. But the challenge advanced by the recent Freedom House statement "placing the onus on those who remain silent and fail to make clear the American consensus" is a fair one, and its authors can have no complaints if it is responded to, in this instance, by one whose voice not all of them always hear with sympathy.

Our adversaries in Vietnam are people for whose predilections and purposes no one in this country need have the faintest sympathy. Allowed to have their way, they would impose a ruthless dictatorship in any area under their control, and the experience of other Communist countries (leaving aside, for the moment, Yugoslavia) does not suggest that this would be followed by economic or social benefits remotely commensurate with the loss of liberty and the isolation from the world community this tyranny would involve. The young Americans who march around with Vietcong flags or profess to favor a Vietcong victory are choosing a very strange way to demonstrate an attachment to the cause of either independence or freedom, if this is indeed what they are interested in.

On the other hand, to recognize that this is so does not mean that it is necessarily the duty of the United States to set all this to rights. Understanding for democratic ideals is not widely spread among the human race. There are more instances of oppression and of the abuse of power in this world than the United States alone can ever hope to remedy, and some of them are closer to home than what transpires in Vietnam.

Nor is it clear to many of us that such Vietnamese as we might find to install in power in the unlikely event of a sweeping military success (for surely we would not wish to hold the country indefinitely under direct colonial administration) would be inclined, or even able, to rule with any markedly greater liberality.
A QUESTION OF HEGEMONY

The question we have really to ask ourselves when we think of the future of Vietnam are primarily two: first, to what extent a future Vietnamese regime would be likely to accept a status of subordination to one of the two great Communist powers and to represent an extension of its political and strategic power; and secondly, what would be the effect of the settlement on neighboring areas.

As to the first of these questions, it is unlikely, in the face of the Chinese-Soviet conflict, that even a Communist regime in any part of Vietnam would find it necessary or desirable, in normal circumstances, to subordinate itself entirely to either of the two great Communist powers. If Hanoi has today come into a one-sided and unhealthy relationship of dependence on Peking, this is surely primarily the effect of the discipline exerted by the war itself.

In the event of a termination of hostilities, there would be neither necessity or advantage from the North Vietnamese standpoint in retaining this one-sided alignment. But for a smaller Communist country to attempt to preserve a balance in the relationship to the two great ones means, as we see from other examples, to exercise a high degree of independence in external relations generally. Thus, even in the event of a complete Vietcong victory (and I am not suggesting we settle for anything of this sort), the result would probably be something less than the automatic extension of Chinese power that many of us fear.

As to the second question, that of the reaction of other countries: this is of course a very serious consideration. Our Government is justified in citing it as a main reason why we could not contemplate any precipitate and disorderly withdrawal. But the elements of this "third country" problem have undergone important alteration as a result of recent events in Indonesia and probably in India and Pakistan as well. Our latitude of action would seem to be greater than it was when we first committed our forces in Vietnam on a serious scale.

OUR GREATER PROBLEMS

The most disturbing aspect of our involvement in Vietnam is its relationship to our interests and responsibilities in other areas of world affairs. Whatever justification this involvement might have had if Vietnam had been the only important problem, or even the outstanding problem, we faced in this world today, this not being the case, its present dimensions can only be said to represent a grievous disbalance of American policy.

For nearly a year now, we have sacrificed to this effort all serious possibility for improvement of our relations with the Soviet Union, with all this implies from the standpoint of the ultimate danger of nuclear war, and this we have done at a time when prospects for such improvement were otherwise not unfavorable. We have placed a great and deeply regrettable strain on the friendship and confidence of Japanese people.

A pall of discouragement has been cast over those responsible for the conduct of the work of the United Nations. Constructive treatment of the great problems of Germany, of nuclear disarmament, of the future of the United Nations and of China in the wider sense has everywhere been placed largely in abeyance in deference to this one remote involvement.

All of these problems are more important, for the long term, than what happens in Vietnam, and there is none of them that will be usefully met even by such further military successes as we may have in the Vietnam area—rather the contrary.

LOSS OF INITIATIVE

The effects of this unbalanced concentration of resources and attention on a single area of world affairs are unfortunate enough even as things stand today. They could be much more unfortunate if we were to be suddenly faced, as we easily could be, with a simultaneous crisis in another area where our interests are importantly engaged.

This being so, if we can now find nothing better to do than to embark upon a further open-ended increase in the level of our commitment simply because the alternatives seem humiliating and frustrating, one will have to ask whether we have not become enslaved to the dynamics of a single unmanageable situation—to the point where we have lost much of the power of initiative and control over our own policy, not just locally but on a world scale.
None of this should be taken as inferring that our Government has been guilty of obvious stupidities. At no time in the history of this whole unhappy affair have its choices been easy or obvious ones and the worst feature of the many violent demonstrations of opinion, pro and con, has been that they have been so vehemently suggested that they have been. Questions about past decisions, furthermore, are not answers to the problem we face at this particular moment.

On the other hand, it will not do for the administration simply to turn to its critics outside Government and say: “What would you suggest?” No one who is not privy to all the available information and who cannot give a larger proportion of his time to the study of public questions could make useful suggestions for specific action in a situation so vastly complicated as this.

The administration could perhaps get more help from public discussion if it could find less exalted and more meaningful terms in which to describe its own predicament. Public understanding is not aided by the demands that the North Vietnamese “cease their aggression” which fall so regularly from the lips of senior State Department officials.

We are not dealing here with established sovereign states, wholly separate and independent and accepted in the Western sense. The situation does not lend itself to classification under established concepts of international law.

Nor does it help us much to be told that our Government is determined “to live up to our commitments,” Commitments to whom? To some South Vietnamese government? If so, to which one?

When and where did we assume the obligation to sacrifice to its defense the whole balance of our policy and the wider interests of world peace? And is this commitment conceived as something unrelated to its own performance, to its ability to command the confidence of its people?

BALANCE OF POWER

Or is it the people of Vietnam themselves to whom this commitment is conceived to relate? Obviously, their feelings cannot today be consulted in any orderly way. But can we be sure, on the basis of what we now know of their reactions, that to have this conflict continue to be fought out on their backs is really preferable in their eyes to the consequences of even the most unfortunate political settlement?

If, in short, what we are actually fighting over is the preservation of some balance of power in that part of the world, which is something about which we have every right to be concerned, let us then discuss the problem in those terms and not try to drape our action in legalisms and moralisms.

No one can question the thesis that a precipitate withdrawal representing the total capitulation of our entire position in that region, would be one of the worst of the alternatives before us. No one will deny that the other side is today wholly unresponsive to any and all suggestions for negotiation—particularly negotiation with us. I wonder, however, whether negotiation—particularly early negotiation between Hanoi and ourselves—is the only, or even the most promising, way out of this situation.

Prospects were never good, at any time, for agreement between the North Vietnamese and ourselves on any sort of publicly negotiated formal contract defining what political conditions should henceforth prevail in the disputed area. Hanoi cannot join us, the “imperialist,” in publicly instructing the Vietcong, partially South Vietnamese force, to be politically unsuccessful.

There would be a better chance of this situation’s simmering down, through a series of reciprocal unilateral actions on the part of the main protagonists, to a point where it became somehow manageable, as so many other tense situations have done in recent years, than of its being resolved by contractual agreement between ourselves and one portion of the other side.

If we wish to develop this possibility of a simmering down (and it is, unhappily, the most promising of all the possibilities we face), then we must be prepared. It would seem, to let the talking be done for us, quite privately and without elbow jogging on our part, by our friends and others who have an interest in the termination of the conflict. And then we must be prepared, depending on such advice as we receive from them, to place limited restraints at some point on our military efforts, and to do so quietly and without published time limits or ultimatums, where we have reason to hope that such restraints will meet with adequate reciprocation from the other side.
SUPPLEMENTAL FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

UNLIKELY OUTCOME

No one can guarantee the success of even this approach, and there are many who, in the light of the pretentious terms in which our objectives have often been cast, would consider it inadequate even if successful. But it is hard to imagine anything better.

I would not know what “victory” means in these conditions. In this sort of a war, one controls what one can take and hold and police with ground forces; one does not control what one bombs. And it seems to me the most unlikely of all contingencies that anyone should come to us on his knees and inquire our terms, whatever the escalation of our effort.

If it be once accepted that in the present difficult situation the security of our own forces is the cardinal consideration, that it is better to hold smaller areas securely than to hold larger ones insecurely and that the immediate objective is not to bring the adversary to the negotiating table but to bring about a mutual lowering of the intensity of hostilities, then perhaps the advantage and disadvantages of such an approach will appear in a different light.

Senator CLARK. Mr. Kennan, are you generally familiar with that Princeton speech? I have it here.

Mr. KENNAN. I think I have it fairly well in mind although I can’t always remember what I said.

Senator CLARK. Well, instead of quoting to you excerpts from it I am going to make the assumption that you remember it pretty well, and ask you to comment on this observation of mine.

GOAL OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY: TO REACH DETENTE WITH SOVIET UNION

In my opinion, the major thrust of our American foreign policy today should be the most difficult task of arriving at an overall detente with the Soviet Union in the interests of world peace. I wonder if you would agree with that, and whether you would care to elaborate?

Mr. KENNAN. I agree very strongly with that, because I think that the greatest dangers to world peace still lie in the area of our relations with the Soviet Union. Not that I think that either of us wants a great war, but when you still have such unresolved problems as the continuing proliferation of nuclear weaponry, and the great outstanding difference over Germany, differences which are becoming after all potentially more explosive and dangerous from year to year as the military strength of the Western German Government increases—so long as you have those problems, I think that the most important questions we have to face lie in the field of our relations with the Soviet Union.

Senator CLARK. I take it, sir, that you would also be of the view that Russia’s present problems and needs—economic and social—are not so different from our own and that such a detente would be in the realm of a very skillful diplomacy exercise over a considerable period of time.

Mr. KENNAN. Yes, in the realm of a skillful but a very patient diplomacy. I don’t think these successes are to be had at any early date. I think some sort of a resolution of the Vietnam conflict is a prerequisite for them. But I am not unhopeful about the long-term future of our relations with Russia.

May I just say there that I have never looked for any utopia in our relations with Russia. We are two great different nations in different situations in different parts of the globe. The relations between two such peoples are always complicated, and there always will be elements in which we do not see eye to eye. Furthermore certain tra-
ditional difference of approach to problems of international policy will always cause some difficulty.

But, when I look back on those days when the so-called containment policy was formed, it seems to me we have made a good deal of progress in our relations with Russia since that time, and that things are better than they were then. And this is a very important recognition, for if we could make that sort of progress over the past 20 years, I think there are possibilities that we could make similar progress over the next 20 years and we ought to cherish those possibilities.

Senator Clark. You would agree, I take it, that the Soviet leaders—and, indeed, the Soviet people—need both peace and reasonably good relations with Western countries almost as much as we need the same from them.

Mr. Kennan. They do, and I think they are conscious of that need.

COMMUNIST CHINA IN BELLIGERENT STAGE

Senator Clark. Now, my understanding is that you feel the present situation in Communist China is somewhat different in that they are in the early stages of a revolution, a belligerent stage.

I wonder if you would state for the benefit of the committee what you think the capabilities and intentions of the Chinese Communists are with respect to the possibility of—in due course—arriving at a detente or an adjustment with us.

Mr. Kennan. I think that at the moment the Chinese Communist leaders are in an extremely difficult and almost hysterical state of mind. They have had frustrations of one sort and another both internally and externally over the course of recent years.

I believe they are really weaker than they like to admit. They are very troubled by what does seem to them to be a sort of encirclement, and an exclusion for which admittedly they are themselves mainly to blame, from the counsels of the world.

But this puts them into a highly excitable and irritated state of mind, and I think there is very little opportunity of talking with them or dealing effectively with them today.

On the other hand, I do not feel that they have the capability to create much mischief beyond the Asian land mass. I am not really too terribly worried about the island territories of the Pacific. I think the Chinese Communists have suffered an enormous reverse in Indonesia, one of great significance, and one that does rather confine any realistic hopes they may have for the expansion of their authority confine them pretty much to the Asian landmass, most of which in east Asia they already occupy.

I think it will take a long time before we could deal with them effectively.

But meanwhile, I think that we should leave them alone. I don't think that it is necessary for us to or desirable for us to try to solve this vast problem by military means. I don't think it is susceptible to solution by military means any more than the problem of Vietnam is.

I am quite prepared to recognize that we face a great and serious problem in the cultivation by the Chinese Communists of a nuclear striking capacity. I don't wish to minimize that for a moment. But
I would prefer to see us tackle that problem, and approach it, by finding as soon as we can an acceptable ending to the conflict in Vietnam, and then pursuing with the Soviet Government, and even with the French, agreements which would permit us to bring the pressure of world opinion to bear a little more effectively on the Chinese.

Senator Clark. With the ultimate hope that we could get into a meaningful dialog with them, as well as with the Russians?

CHANGE IN CHINA'S ATTITUDE INEVITABLE

Mr. Kennan. Yes, with an ultimate hope that we could at least bring this terrible problem of nuclear weaponry under some measure of control. And then I think things will change in China, as they changed in Russia. They always do. A new generation of Chinese leaders will come. They could scarcely be worse in their attitude toward us than the present ones. And as I look back over the history of international affairs, it seems to me that the counsels of patience and restraint have been more effective as a general rule, than the counsels of violence and particularly the unleashing of unlimited violence.

Now, there has been great confusion sowed precisely in this respect by Hitler and the National Socialists; and no statement of this sort that you make can be without its exceptions. There are no universally valid generalizations here. There are, there can be, threats to the peace that have to be faced in the way that Hitler should have been faced. But, by and large, especially when one is dealing with conflicts which threaten to develop into great world conflicts on a scale that has never been known before in history, surely it is better to exhaust the counsels of patience and restraint before one plunges into the others.

Senator Clark. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Senator Pell. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Kennan, I have long admired your thinking. I guess more than 20 years ago, as a junior departmental officer, I used to read your lucid reports—the most lucid and interesting we used to get—and afterward I followed you in middle Europe, and in a much more modest way was castigated by the Soviets, too, for my activities. I have followed your thinking all these years and I have spent most of my time in the Eastern European area when I was in the State Department, which is also the area of your specialization.

WAR WITH CHINA: GROUND WAR OR NUCLEAR WAR

Do you believe that the course of events we are following now in Vietnam—which seems inevitably to lead to a commitment of many more troops, steady escalation, the capability of erasing of Hanoi and Haiphong, and the placement of North Vietnam with the China—will lead to our fighting the Chinese on a man-to-man basis, or whether we will fight with nuclear weapons? Remembering the public response to the use of nuclear weapons at the time of Korea, do you believe the Soviet Union will feel compelled to retaliate, or will it stay out of that one?
Mr. KENNAN. If we do not resort to nuclear weapons, and merely get into a conflict on land between our forces and the Chinese Communist forces in southeast Asia, I should not think that the Soviet Union would intervene in any formal sense.

But, if nuclear weapons come to be used, I simply cannot predict the effects of world opinion, the effects on our own opinion, the cumulative quality of such a conflict. It could lead to anything. I am afraid that I can only say to you that the consequences of such a development are unpredictable. They could be anything. They could be an entrance of the Soviet Union into the war. I am afraid if it went to the bitter end we probably would create a situation in which the Soviet Union would be almost forced to come out against us in a strong military way, and whether that, again, would develop into a nuclear exchange between the Soviet Union and ourselves, I do not know. But this represents, all of it, a fringe of apocalyptic danger on which I should never like to see this country play, if you see what I mean. This is the edge of a precipice, of an abyss, and we ought never to get near this edge.

Senator PELL. To use another phrase, it is almost a brink.

Mr. KENNAN. It is indeed a brink, but in a terribly serious sense.

POSIBILITY OF REUNIFICATION OF DIVIDED COUNTRIES

Senator PELL. With your experience as Ambassador to Yugoslavia, and looking ahead—as you did when you were in charge of the Policy Planning Staff and as Ambassador to Yugoslavia—if we look ahead 20 years, it would seem to me likely that all the countries that are now divided—Germany, Korea, Vietnam—one way or another—will probably be one country. On the basis of your experience in Yugoslavia, do you see any hope that there will eventually be a unified government in Vietnam?

I noticed in the testimony last week—in the questioning of General Gavin—this question came up. I was wondering if you saw this end as a possibility—looking way, way ahead when the present expansionist moves of Ho Chi Minh have died down.

Mr. KENNAN. It is an observation that ought to give us food for thought, that it was only a Communist, Tito, who succeeded really in uniting the Yugoslavs to this extent over the course of many years, and I don't know how else this could have been done. Of course in the case of Germany and of Korea, there are very complicated situations, because the interests of other great powers are extensively involved, and you don't get a fair test of what the ability of the country to unite itself would be if these outside pressures did not exist.

The tendency, of course, is toward national unification, wherever there is a sense of national identity. How much there is in Vietnam, I don't know. I am rather puzzled by the different things I read about this. I just don't know.

But I gather that these people think of themselves as something quite different from Chinese, and that there are strong nationalistic streaks in their outlook.

Senator PELL. I don't know either—and that is why I was hoping to develop this line of thought.
ARE WE PLANNING FAR ENOUGH AHEAD?

Finally, I was wondering if you felt that the Government is doing enough thinking ahead—20 or 30 years. When you started out with the Policy Planning Staff, it was designed to look ahead; you quickly got diverted to a series of crash projects.

Is there anyone in the Government today—to your knowledge, from where you sit at Princeton—any group of people who are looking at the world outside the United States as we want to see it in the year 2000? We are working hard in the Great Society domestically, but is there any group or any branch of the Government that is looking that far ahead internationally?

Mr. KENNAN. You know, I can't answer this problem. I simply am not familiar enough with what goes on in the Government these days. I am not living here.

You know, I think it is impossible to look usefully too far ahead in international affairs. It is too full of uncertainties. And my own feeling, after some years involved in the planning function there in Washington, was that perhaps the most important thing a government such as ours can have, as it faces the long-term future of international relations, is right principles rather than the gift of prophecy.

Senator PELL. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. We just have a moment.

I yield to the Senator from Minnesota before we recess.

QUESTION OF AVAILABILITY OF DATA ON VIETNAM

Senator McCarthy. I will try to come back this afternoon, but I would like to ask this one question:

In your remarks, Mr. Kennan, you observed that there were a great deal of data available on this question which is not available to you. Do you really think in a case that is as public and as confused as this, there is really significant data which may be available to those who are closer to decision than you are or than we are—data which, if it were available, would significantly influence your position in this particular case?

Mr. KENNAN. In the strictly military field, yes, and to some extent in the political field, too.

Now, what I mean by this reply, Senator McCarthy, is that I am constantly being bewildered by reports in the press that seem to me to have contradictory implications. We are told one day that we could not possibly hold enclaves there in South Vietnam, and yet I see a statement in this morning's press to the effect that the South Vietnamese Government has decided to hold precisely such enclaves. One just doesn't know what to believe, and it is the same with political conditions.

Senator McCarthy. Let me repeat: Do you think those closer to decision have such information or do you just hope that they have this information?

Mr. KENNAN. I hope they have, but I am not sure that there is any authoritative opinion about these questions, or correct opinion about them, even behind the scenes.
Senator McCarthy. Passing your best judgment on this particular case, on the basis of what you know about it, and on the basis of your experience with similarly difficult and complex situations, would you conclude that there is likely to be a great gap between the data which the decisionmakers may have—those who are close to the decision—and the information which we have, or which you have?

Mr. Kennan. Only perhaps when it comes to developments of the last 24 or 48 hours. In general, it seems to me that the public has access, if it wants to read it here, to press coverage which gives it a pretty good idea of what the situation is.

I think that anyone who wants to follow the situation attentively in the press can know most of what the Government knows which is relevant to a timespan of more than the last 24 or 48 hours. There is always the possibility of something might just have happened in the last few hours that they know about but we don't.

Senator McCarthy. Then, if you go back beyond 48 hours as a basis for a judgment, we ought not to be frightened off by those who say if you knew what I know.

Mr. Kennan. No, and if I put this disclaimer in to my statement here, it is because I have had friends who profess to a specialized knowledge of Vietnam, who have shouted me down very brutally and say, "You have no right to open your mouth about it. You have never been there, and you shouldn't have any ideas about it."

Senator McCarthy. So you would only apply this limitation to about 48 hours.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Kennan. Thank you.

The Chairman. Thank you very much.

We will recess until 2:30.

(Whereupon, at 1 p.m., the committee recessed, to reconvene at 2:30 p.m., the same day.)

AFTERNOON SESSION

The Chairman. The committee will come to order.

I recognize the Senator from Missouri, Mr. Symington.

Senator Symington. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Kennan, it is a great privilege to see you as always. As I understand it, unfortunately I could not be here all the time this morning, but I think I have had the benefit of listening to you, I was thinking, about 20 years.

STATEMENT OF HON. GEORGE KENNAN—Resumed

Mr. Kennan. That is right.

Senator Symington. You have changed your position with respect to containment, have you not?

Mr. Kennan. Well, I recognize there are things that I should have said in the article that I did not say. But I still consider that containment is better than war, both with regard to Russia and with regard to China.

Senator Symington. Thank you.

Page 2 of your statement you say "it should be our Government's aim to liquidate this involvement just as soon as this can be done without inordinate damage to our own prestige or to the stability of con-
ditions in that area." Do you think we could leave that area at this time without that type and character of damage?

Mr. KENNAN. No, sir; not unilaterally, and not without some sort of a political compromise.

Senator SYMINGTON. Thank you.

MEANING OF "VICTORY" AND "WINNING"

On page 2 you talk about victory. You have, "great misgivings about any deliberate expansion of hostilities on our part directed to the achievement of something called "victory." Do you know anybody in the military, or the administration for that matter who has in their mind this question of victory as we have known it in the past, with respect to this Vietnam operation?

Mr. KENNAN. Well, I have not talked to very many people down here. In fact I do not think I have talked to anyone in the administration or the military for many months. But I still see a great many references to our determination to win, and this is what I have reference to here. I do not know what the word "win" means in these circumstances, and I am not sure that whether we win or not in this sense is purely a matter of our determination. I think that it may be that we are undertaking things for which we do not have the suitable instruments and potentiality.

Senator SYMINGTON. If we had to have any determination you would rather see it be a determination of success than a determination to lose, would you not?

Mr. KENNAN. Yes, Senator; if determination is what is going to define the outcome here. I naturally would. But I would like to see our determination first of all be to preserve the balance of the foreign policies of this Nation, to proceed in a prudent way with its resources and its manpower, and to show a very, very responsible attitude toward the effects of what we do on the prospects for world peace.

Senator SYMINGTON. I understand. But you do not know anybody in the Government who is after a victory, as it was considered in the past, do you?

Mr. KENNAN. Well, these words keep slipping through!

Senator SYMINGTON. From whom?

Mr. KENNAN. I would have to run the statements down, but it seems to me that repeatedly this phrase has been used—that this is a contest that we have to win.

Senator SYMINGTON. By whom?

Mr. KENNAN. Well, I cannot name it now. I would be glad to look some of these things up and to give you the names afterward.

Senator SYMINGTON. I wish you would let the record show that I know of nobody in the administration who wants a victory as victory has been considered in the past. In fact I do not know of anybody who thinks we could have such a victory.

MEANING OF "STRATEGIC BOMBING"

On page 4 you say:

Yet we abuse that confidence and good will in the most serious way when we press the military struggle in Vietnam, and particularly when we press it by means of strategic bombing.
Would you define “strategic bombing”?

Mr. Kennan. Well, I had in mind here the bombing we are doing of North Vietnam with a view to interdicting the supply column, that sort of thing, as distinct from the tactical bombing that is directed toward forces opposing us on the battlefield.

Senator Symington. Would you consider bombing a road strategic bombing?

Mr. Kennan. If it is not related to the immediate tactical task, and relates to an area far away from the field of battle, I think I would.

Senator Symington. Suppose we discovered a truckload of arms and ammunition and soldiers going down the Ho Chi Minh trail. Would you consider that—if it was 150 or 200 miles away from our troops—would you consider trying to knock out those weapons and those soldiers in those trucks strategic bombing?

Mr. Kennan. I believe I would, Senator, provided we could be pretty sure that what we were hitting was the truck and not a lot of other things.

Senator Symington. You would be opposed to that?

Mr. Kennan. In this case not. But when it comes to bombings on such a scale that they are almost bound to bring a great deal of damage to civilian life, this is what worries me.

Senator Symington. I am not talking about what could be done, but about what is being done. Now we are bombing trucks on the Ho Chi Minh trail. Would you be opposed to that?

Mr. Kennan. I think that if the clear relationship to our military operations can be demonstrated, it will not have as bad an effect on Japanese opinion as in other instances. This was the connotation in which I spoke of this here.

DIFFERENT CHARACTER OF BOMBINGS

Senator Symington. I spent several days in Japan last month. I must say, with great respect to you, sir, that I am not in entire agreement as to just what is our position in Japan today. But in any case what I am interested in is the type and character of air attack you think we could make; because, as I understand it, if you are opposed to this type and character of bombing, then you would want to wait until we got into hand-to-hand combat on the ground with no air attacks unless said attacks had direct connection with troops fighting in a particular locality; is that correct?

Mr. Kennan. Well, certainly the use of air would enter into it long before we got into hand-to-hand contact, because if you admit its legitimacy with regard to tactical operations, you can carry it out over a very considerable area.

Senator Symington. Am I correct in the way I have stated your position with respect to bombing?

Mr. Kennan. Senator, I realize there is no very fine and clear line that can be drawn here. My point is that the spectacle of us using enormous quantities of bombs against areas that will appear in the rest of Asia not to be very well equipped, perhaps, to defend themselves, at least the people themselves, against this sort of an attack, does a lot of damage to our reputation.
Senator Symington. I have heard, in other briefings, that it is estimated the number of American casualties in this war is about the same as the number of North Vietnamese casualties—it is estimated our bombing created in North Vietnam. Would not that figure tend to show that we have tried to be very careful not to kill or wound people in North Vietnam?

Mr. Kennan. It would, and I have no doubt that this is the case. But unfortunately in this world, what things seem is often more important than what things are, and we stand under certain handicaps. Anything that a great big powerful white nation such as ours does is going to be interpreted to our disadvantage, if there is any way to do it. This is what I had in mind.

Senator Symington. Then, as I understand your position, even though trucks and buses are carrying soldiers and ammunition and guns to be used against our people and the South Vietnamese, and are run by oil and we could attack that oil in North Vietnam, under no circumstances would you attack the military target of petroleum?

Mr. Kennan. I would not say under no circumstances, but I would think by and large we would be better off to avoid such bombing. I realize it is very hard to discuss such problems unless one is specific. There might be targets that were of such cruciality that military necessity would require it, but it seems to me on principle undesirable and—

Senator Symington. What oil targets would you consider we have the right to attack from the air?

Mr. Kennan. You know, these are questions which, about which, I have never tried to define my position. I am not a military person. As I have already said, I think no one objects to the use of air with reasonable relation to the combat operations on the ground, and that can mean to a considerable degree beyond them. But when it comes to North Vietnam, I simply have my doubts; because I do not see that this type of operation has produced great results in the past, and it does seem to me that it has produced very important negative psychological effects on peoples further afield.

BOMBINGS IN NORTH VIETNAM AND NORTH KOREA COMPARED

Senator Symington. Do you see any difference in the way we are attacking from the air in South Vietnam and the way we attacked from the air in Korea?

Mr. Kennan. Well, it seems to me that in Korea this was mostly in the category of tactical bombing but it also seems to me, looking at it from a distance and from a civilian point of view that it was extraordinarily unsuccessful.

Senator Symington. Do you think the bombing was comparable to the bombing in Korea?

Mr. Kennan. A lot of it is.

Senator Symington. Did you object to the bombing in Korea?

Mr. Kennan. No; I did not, although I felt that its effects were overrated in advance. I mean the predictions that were made for it turned out to be highly exaggerated, I thought.

Senator Symington. Well, those who believed in the right of air attacks against North Korea are, many of them, disturbed because
the target restrictions in North Vietnam are much more rigid than were target restrictions in Korea. That is the reason I asked you the question.

Mr. Kennan. Well, I am not sure that the two situations are entirely comparable. We had much more of a regular confrontation of armies and a conventional military situation there in Korea. I simply point out the fact that these things are psychologically undesirable, and that if you strike a balance between the military results they might bring in and the damage they do to our reputation abroad, it seems to me from all I can read that this balance is not to our advantage when we go very far afield.

The Chairman. The Senator's time is up.

Senator Symington. I would ask one more question if I may. You say:

Our motives are widely misinterpreted; and the spectacle of Americans inflicting grievous injury on the lives of a poor and helpless people, and particularly a people of different race and color, no matter how warranted by military necessity or by the excesses of the adversary our operations may seem to us to be * * * this spectacle produces reactions among millions of people throughout the world profoundly detrimental to the image we would like them to hold of this country.

Do you not feel that there is some right to consider also the poor and helpless people of South Vietnam that the Vietcong are chopping up in the villages, 3,000 of their leaders last year.

Mr. Kennan. I have no brief to hold for the Vietcong here, and as I have said, I do not think these judgments are even fair to us. But I think that this is the way the world is. I think a country of our strength is forgiven less than these fellows are forgiven.

The Chairman. Senator Case.

Senator Case. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Kennan, it is very good to welcome a constituent to the committee.

Mr. Kennan. I appreciate that.

Senator Case. I may say we in New Jersey are very proud of you.

There are two lines of questioning that I would like to explore with you a little bit, and I hope you will do most of the talking.

MEANING OF "AGGRESSION"

I take it that one of our problems here is that we are facing a kind of aggression which is not so easy to recognize and not so clear perhaps—what the Communist Chinese particularly call wars of national liberation—in contrast to the kind of aggression where armies mobilize along a frontier and then cross and physically occupy foreign territory.

Now, I take it you do not disagree that the former, that is the kind we face now, is just as much aggression as the latter; is that correct?

Mr. Kennan. Senator Case, I think the use of the word "aggression" with regard to what we are facing today in Vietnam is confusing. I think that this present conflict has so complicated a background, so long a background, so much of it does result from things that have happened within South Vietnam, and not outside of it—and not only that, but the border between North and South Vietnam is of a curious quality. It was not meant originally to be a border between states. All these things seem to me to indicate that when one uses the term "aggression" as some of the people in our own Govern-
ment have been using it, one confuses the issue. This is, of course, in
part, the invasion of one country, if one wants to describe it that way,
by forces of another country, although all of these things involve
stretching of terms. But in any case, it is not just that. It is also a
civil conflict within South Vietnam, and one of great seriousness. I
do not think that we can afford to delude ourselves that the Vietcong
are simply an external force or a force that would not exist if there
were not external encouragement. They might not be so strong, but
all accounts indicate that they were fairly strong years ago, before
they had this help from the North Vietnamese.
Senator CASE. Well, this, as applied to this particular area and this
particular situation, is a question basically of fact.
Mr. KENNAN. Yes.
Senator CASE. You would not disagree that there can be as serious
aggression by means of bribery, by means of terror, by means of other
use of native dissident elements as there has been historically by cross­
ing another country's border with your troops.
Mr. KENNAN. I would certainly agree that the effects can be no
less serious and final and that this presents a great problem. But I
think we ought to be careful to identify it, insofar as it is that, as a
question of internal unrest and insubordination rather than a ques­
tion of external attack.
Senator CASE. Well, I appreciate that distinction.
Mr. KENNAN. Yes.
ORIGINS OF THE VIETCONG
Senator CASE. I agree we we must attempt to define it.
I take it you disagree rather sharply with what Under Secretary
of State Ball said recently in his Northwestern University speech,
that North Vietnam and Hanoi systematically created the Vietcong
forces in matters of their equipment, in the guerrilla war and sup­
porting that war on a day-to-day basis, and that the National Libera­
tion Front is purely a fictitious organization created by Hanoi to rein­
force a fiction, namely that it is the legitimate spokesman for the people
of South Vietnam.
You disagree basically with that.
Mr. KENNAN. This is not the impression I have. I have the im­
pression this is something that has existed for quite a time there in
the south, and probably has, regardless of the means, no doubt un­
democratic means, by which it was obtained, a considerable degree
of what you could call support among the population.
By "support," too, I would not wish to be misunderstood. This
may not be sympathy with the political aims even; there are many
reactions on the part of people that call upon them and bring them
to support this sort of force. Many other things enter in there.
Senator CASE. I remember—of course you know much more about
it than I do—but I remember from my rather slight touch with it
after the war, in West Germany there was very great concern that
Germany was going to be Communist very soon and great timidity
on the part of the people there who had no interest in communism
but took care not to make their Western sympathies at all obvious.
Mr. KENNAN. Yes.
Senator CASE. For this very reason, so this kind of thing can hap­
of liberation,” and is the kind of thing we have got to find ways of dealing with.

Mr. Kennan. That is correct. And, Senator, I would like to say I have great sympathy on the way you have described this. On many occasions, talking with Russian Communists, I have tried to impress upon them that this type of thing—stimulating and encouraging and organizing rebellious minorities within another country and seizing power through them, could be just as much a matter of real aggression as anything else.

Senator Case. And requires whatever resistance we can apply to it within reasonable limits.

Mr. Kennan. Yes. But one always has to bear in mind that there is usually in these situations some ingredient of real local injustice out of which these people profit, so that it is never just a clear case of some outsider going in and doing some sort of a magic transformation, as I said this morning, in people and making Communists out of them. There is usually something on which they can work, which is an indigenous situation, and for this reason it is always confused.

Senator Case. Mr. Chairman, I may have some minutes more, but I am being called to the floor to make a speech before the Senate adjourns, and if I may, I would like to reserve the right to come back and finish the last 2 or 3 minutes.

The Chairman. Certainly.

Senator Sparkman!

Senator Sparkman. Mr. Kennan, I am sorry I was not able to be here this morning and missed your testimony, in which I am sure you must have brought out many of the things going through the minds of all of us.

I want to say to you, sir, that I have always had a very high regard for your opinions. I followed them down through the years, even back in the early days of containment.

CONTAINING VIETNAM

You have referred to it here. How can we contain in Vietnam?

Mr. Kennan. Of course the answer to that depends on whether one is talking about the long term or the short term. Our intervention there has created conditions which affect this question very vitally today, but which would not be applicable over the long term.

LONG-TERM INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES

If you are talking about the long terms, I sometimes think that we would do better at any rate than we have proven able to do in the past when it comes to situations of this sort, although there are no two of them alike of course, but we would do better if we really would show ourselves a little more relaxed and less terrified of what happens in certain of the smaller countries of Asia and Africa, and not jump around like an elephant frightened by a mouse every time these things occur.

It is my feeling that no one is going to be able to draw blood from a stone, and no one is going to make much more out of these territories than what is in them. I do not think that even the Communists, in
most instances, are going to do anything with these territories that is necessarily going to be as tragic as we think.

I think sometimes we make the problem worse than it is by the size of our own alarm and jitteriness. We are a very great power, and we could absorb probably more of this sort of thing than one thinks. Other peoples have their troubles, too; and sometimes a bit of jiu-jitsu—letting the other fellow fall on his face—might not be the worst way of dealing with certain of these problems.

A great many Americans are concerned, for example, about Castro in Cuba, and at times they have had good reason to be, and I do not for a moment underestimate the seriousness of the crisis we faced there some years ago. But it does seem to me that we must carefully stack up our advantages against our disadvantages in these situations. For the first time in a long, long time, someone else is paying the bills in Cuba, someone else is getting milked, someone else has the problems of dealing with the Cuban regime. For once we can sit by. And personally I do not think that the Russians are going to have any great satisfaction out of their involvement in Cuba over the long run. I think they will liquidate it by themselves in the course of time.

I only cite this as an example to show that very often the situation will tolerate more than we think it would, and by our interference we raise questions of prestige which need not have been raised, and which give to these events, sometimes, an unfavorable quality from our standpoint that they would not otherwise have attained.

Now, of course, what I have just said is relevant only to the long-term problems of containment in certain areas, and with relation to certain countries. It does not relate to the situation we have before us today in Vietnam, where we have created an entirely different set of considerations through our intervention.

I do not know whether this is responsive and helpful with regard to your question. It is all I can say, sir.

Senator Sparkman. It seems to me, in all frankness, that your answer relates to a time that is in the past rather than in the present, is that not true?

Mr. Kennan. Yes, but possible to a time that is in the future, too, because South Vietnam is not the only country where things of this sort could happen.

IMMEDIATE INTERESTS IN VIETNAM

Senator Sparkman. Of course right now we are confronted with a very difficult problem. I am sure you recognize that fact. We have our men in Vietnam. We are involved there. There is a situation that prevails. I do not see how we can adopt these calm attitudes and so forth at this point of the game.

So, what I had in mind was if we do adhere to the principle of containment and want to practice it, what are the things that we do at this point?

Mr. Kennan. My answer to this would be that we try to establish in South Vietnam some position, militarily, that we can be fairly sure of holding over a long period of time, with due regard to the security of our own forces, and that having established that, we do not try to expand this conflict, but rather give things a chance to simmer down,
and let other people who are interested in the resolution of this conflict see what they can do in trying to find some sort of a compromise solution.

I do not think that we can hope in the present circumstances to negotiate any such solution ourselves. I think it will have to be done by other people, and when the proposals have been made, we will have to decide whether we can accept them or whether we cannot.

As of today, I think the chances for any such compromise solution are very poor. But I think time might change that, and my concern at the moment is that we should consolidate our existing presence in South Vietnam in some such way that we can be sure of holding it without great danger to our forces.

I believe, Senator, that we have now done something which is very important, and which perhaps had to be done at some stage, if we were ever to find our way out of this difficulty, and this is to demonstrate the seriousness of our purpose there. I think no one doubts that anymore today, and this is the positive side of an effort over the past year which has had many negative sides, too. But having demonstrated that seriousness, I think we do not need at this time to go further. I would like to see us try to stabilize as much as we can the situation that exists today, to make it clear to these people that they cannot kick us out of there, and that at some point they are going to have to talk to us, if they want us to get out of there. Once they digest this lesson, I think we may be on the road toward an acceptable resolution of this whole miserable problem. This will not be a resolution which will, I am afraid, contain any triumphs for us or any great satisfactions. This is not the kind of situation it is.

ELEMENTS OF A SATISFACTORY PEACEFUL SOLUTION

Senator Sparkman. In your statement you refer to a satisfactory peaceful resolution of the conflict, and you have referred to it here. Could you state to us what the elements of such a settlement would be?

Mr. Kennan. They are not entirely visible to me today, I must admit that. And I am only hoping that perhaps the future would reveal them, because I have seen other cases in the past where solutions which were not visible at one time proved to be possible at another.

But it would seem to me that eventually there must be some sort of a political compromise between the various factions involved in South Vietnam. And I am afraid that others, as I say, are going to have to work this out—and the South Vietnamese themselves. There are a number of factions there. It is not just the Vietcong and their opponents. There are Catholics, there are Buddhists, there are Montagnards, there are a lot of people who have fingers in that pie. And at some point, perhaps, they, who I must say are rarely lacking in political resourcefulness when they want to do something, may cook up compromises which today look impossible to us.

I do not think that anything of this sort can occur in the present atmosphere of sharp conflict and great nervousness on both sides, and this is why I would like to see things quiet down.

I have seen a number of other international situations which looked hopeless at one moment but looked better after one has simply halted
the violence for a few months. Things always change and pressures and impulses break through, then, which cannot break through in a highly militant and excited atmosphere.

Now this may sound like a poor suggestion, and no doubt it is in many respects. It certainly contains no great glory for us. But I am measuring it against the two alternatives, one of which would be to launch ourselves in a growing involvement of unlimited dimensions in a part of the world that is very unfavorable to us, and the other would be to get out in a disorderly and abrupt and unilateral fashion, presenting our adversaries with a gratuitous prestige victory, I do not favor either of those alternatives. This is all I can see to do.

RUSSIAN INVOLVEMENT IN VIETNAM

Senator Sparkman. What is your conception as to the involvement of Russia in this situation? You are a longtime expert on Russia.

Mr. Kennan. The Russians are involved primarily through their fear of the very violent and destructive criticisms that are being raised against them by the Chinese. The Russians are, after all, Communists. They are committed to an ideology which looks very out of date and very unconvincing to me but to which they are committed by the whole past history of their party. This ideology also has its own semantic symbols and fetishes. One of them is imperialism, and the Russians do not want to appear before the world public and particularly before the public of the Communist nations in any guise that can permit the Chinese to say, "You are the running dogs of American imperialism. You are doing the work of the Americans."

For this reason the Russians are very concerned to show themselves strongly against us in this conflict. And they are concerned to demonstrate that they are giving all the help they could reasonably be expected to give to the North Vietnamese. However, the Soviet Government has many irons in the fire. It has a great variety of interests. It is a world power. It has to think in terms of East and West. And it would be my judgment that it hopes that this conflict can be resolved peacefully and in the not-too-distant future.

I was asked, if I may just say this, this morning, why the Soviet Union opposed the reconvening of the Geneva Conference. This is a difficult question to answer. I can give no complete answer to it. But I think it is simply, at this point, fear of Chinese criticism if they should do it.

Senator Sparkman. Thank you. My time is up.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman. Mr. Aiken?

"COMMITMENTS" AND "OBLIGATIONS"

Senator Aiken. Mr. Kennan, usually when the executive branch discusses this matter with us they refer to our commitment. I notice you use the words both commitment and obligations. Do you make a distinction between an obligation and a commitment?

Mr. Kennan. Well, I don't make much of a distinction here. An obligation, I conceive as being to some other party. A commitment, of course, can be to ourselves in a way, but that should be specified.
I have used the terms interchangeably, I think, in this statement.

Senator Aiken. Couldn't we have a moral obligation to assist oppressed people to the best of our ability, without having the obligation to make a commitment to them?

Mr. Kennan. I am sure that this is conceivable. It is a subjective question. But I myself feel that any moral obligation that we have toward the strengthening of the liberties of other people is a very indirect one, and exists only in the degree in which it was defined by the statement from John Quincy Adams which I quoted at the end of my remarks this morning. We owe them a debt of sympathy, if what they are really after is their liberties, which is another question, because remember that practically everybody who wants our aid in the world claims that he wants it in the cause of freedom. This is not always the case. In many instances these words are taken in vain by people simply because they think they will appeal to us.

How interested the South Vietnamese regime really is in freedom in our sense is something which I do not know. I cannot speak to this, you see.

Senator Aiken. I have felt that we had a moral obligation to help the people of South Vietnam, but that did not necessarily mean that we must enter into a commitment to do our utmost. Assuming that we do have a commitment, there would you say there is any point beyond which we should not go in meeting that commitment? I think I should ask the Secretary of State or somebody else that question.

Mr. Kennan. Yes.

Senator Aiken. But I think it is a very good question.

Is there a point beyond which we should not go or does it imply that our total manpower and other resources are involved in that commitment?

Mr. Kennan. Senator, I cannot imagine that anyone with any degree of responsible concern for the fortunes of the people of this country could ever have given to any foreign political authority an unlimited claim on our resources and our manpower. I just do not see how this is conceivable.

There are a great many countries in the world besides Vietnam, and we have many other obligations and responsibilities, and it seems to me out of the question that we should assume any such obligation toward anyone else or feel that we had it even in a moral sense.

After all, our first duty is to ourselves and to the life of our own people here, and to their prosperity, and I would be strongly averse to, I would fight with every fiber of my own being against, the suggestion that we should ever give to any foreign political authority anything in the nature of an indefinite claim on the resources of this country.

Senator Aiken. Our total resources.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESSES AND COMMITMENTS

I notice in your formal statement this morning you say, "I do fail to understand how it is possible for us to enter into any such commitment otherwise than through the constitutional processes which were meant to come into play when even commitments of lesser import than this were undertaken."
That recalls what someone has said, told me recently and I have no knowledge of whether it is true or not, that at Munich that Chamberlain failed to—that he bypassed the processes that were provided for in the British Constitution and made decisions by himself. Do you know anything about that? Of course it may not have anything to do with this at all.

Mr. Kennan. I can't judge it from the British standpoint of British constitutional law, which is quite different from ours.

Senator Aiken. Yes.

Mr. Kennan. But I think perhaps the same principle is involved. What I meant to say here is that I may have missed something but it seems to me that, no doubt without deliberate intent, and probably with the most worthy of intentions, we have nevertheless involved ourselves here in a situation which, according to the consensus of the Fathers of our Constitution, would certainly have called for a great national debate and a very solemn decision in the Senate as well as in the executive branch. I am not aware that this has taken place. And for this reason I always find myself caught up short when I see the way that this struggle is often referred to today in our public debates: people talk about our living up to our "commitments," and say we must fulfill our "commitments" to these people.

Well, these commitments, as we now interpret them, go very far indeed. They go, as I pointed out here, further than the normal military alliance. To commit yourself, in any way, to assure the internal security of another government, means to commit yourself to interference in the most vital process of its own internal political life, and this seems to me a commitment of such seriousness that it should not be lightly or casually slipped into. This is what I meant to say.

Senator Aiken. I would think that to commit ourselves without limitation—

Mr. Kennan. Yes.

Senator Aiken (continuing). Is certainly a pretty heavy responsibility for anyone to assume, particularly when processes are provided for for senatorial advice and consent. I think it well to remind ourselves frequently that these processes are provided for by our own Constitution and our laws, and trust that anyone carrying the responsibility will remember it.

That is all, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman. Senator Case, I believe you have 3 or 4 minutes left of your time, if you would like to take it now.

Senator Case. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You are most kind.

U.S. RESPONSIBILITY AS A WORLD POWER

What I had in mind was your thoughts about the extent to which we have a responsibility in the world for world peace, the extent to which in the absence of world order run by law with courts and a system of enforcing court orders, this country has to act as Britain once did and other countries perhaps earlier?

Now, the other side of the coin, I suppose, would be to say we have no function, no responsibility in this matter at all. So long as our immediate security is not involved we can wash our hands of the world. Do you move in this direction in your thinking?
I wish you would try to assess our responsibility as a world power, the greatest, perhaps, certainly on the free world side, in the world today.

Mr. Kennan. Senator, that question goes very deep, and it puts me in a sense on the defensive because I find that—

Senator Case. It isn't intended to at all.

Mr. Kennan. Now, that I am beyond the barrier of 60 years I find myself with more and more sympathy for the concepts of foreign policy that prevailed in this country in an earlier time; I find myself, if you will, in many respects sort of a neo-isolationist.

Senator Case. You know, this may be catching. I am past the barrier, too. [Laughter.]

Mr. Kennan. What I would say is simply this: I think we have an enormous responsibility with regard to world peace. We are in many important respects the most powerful nation in the world. There certainly is no nation which, if its affairs are handled prudently and well and thoughtfully, can contribute more than we can to preserving the peace of the world.

I do think, though, what we have to bear in mind here mainly is preserving the peace between the great powers, hostilities among whom might really have appalling effects for the world at large and set our entire civilization back by goodness knows how much.

I do not have any illusions that we can stop all violence everywhere in the world. I think that the slogan which Litvinov, the Soviet foreign affairs commissar, used to mouth so frequently in the 1930's—that "peace is indivisible"—is not correct; it is in fact a horrendous doctrine. Men have always fought; they are always going to. We must hope now that the great powers such as ourselves and Russia are aware of the fact that the weapons in our hands are of such terribleness that we cannot afford to fight any more. And I think we are coming to this realization, to the realization that what we have in our hands is so terrible that we cannot afford the luxury of settling affairs with each other the way people have traditionally settled them all through human history.

But there are a great many new nations, small nations, nations with inexperienced governments, nations with shallow traditions of national life dotted all around this world. Believe me, they are going to fight with each other. And it seems to me that our role here as a great power must be to try to isolate, to moderate these conflicts, to settle them as quickly and as easily as we can, not to worry too much about the issues, because there will be right and wrong on both sides, but to try to keep these local conflicts from doing great damage to world peace.

Now, the problem we face with relation to Vietnam today is how do we best serve world peace at this moment? Do we serve it best by increasing the measure of our involvement in Vietnam? By trying to root out the Vietcong by fire and sword? By increasing the intensity of this conflict in a single area, to neglect, I must say, of our world responsibilities, our responsibilities in other areas? Or do we serve it better by trying as best we can, to bring about some sort of a solution of the fighting in Vietnam and applying ourselves then once more, imaginatively and courageously and enthusiastically, to the solution of the great, really great, and fateful problems that we still have outstanding with the Soviet Union?
There, as I see it, is the question, and my own answer would be that it is the last. I understand that people can differ about this.

Senator Case. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman. Thank you, Senator Case.

Mr. Kennan, there are one or two questions I would like to pursue. One of these is not necessarily directly on the subject of your previous testimony.

ARE THE HEARINGS IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST?

There has been some criticism of this committee for holding these hearings at all. It has been said that we are giving aid and comfort to our enemies. You are very familiar with the Communists, and you are very familiar with this whole scene. Do you feel these hearings, not only yourself today but with General Gavin and others, are in the public interest or not?

Mr. Kennan. Senator, I am aware that no one sitting in this seat and testifying before your committee can suppose that his observations are purely detached and that they do not affect the situation to which they relate. To talk about this situation at all, even as an outside observer who doesn't live in Washington, is today a responsible act, and must affect the situation itself in some ways. I can assure you that it is not a pleasure for me to sit here and to say things which I know are going to be taken in some respects as critical or skeptical of the wisdom of our present policies. I know that there are people who are going to come up and say that "you have made the situation worse by the things you have said, and you have made it harder for us than it would have otherwise been to achieve a solution in Vietnam."

But is my conviction that the implications of this involvement, the complications to which it may lead, are of such magnitude that we should not wander into them without the widest, most serious, most responsible, and most searching sort of a public debate—a responsible debate—in the legislative branch of our Government. And while it may be undesirable in some respects that other people listen in, I think it is far more important that this debate take place, even if it has these undesirable side effects, than that we move into such realms of danger without it.

It seems to me absolutely essential to the continued successful functioning of our kind of a democracy that we talk things out in the most serious and responsible way.

Now, I have not participated in any demonstrations about Vietnam, I haven't even been in any teach-ins or anything like that. But asked to speak on such an occasion, I think that I have to give you my honest opinion, and I hope that it is useful. It is my strong impression that it is not only useful but it is essential, indispensable in fact, to the workings of our democratic system that there be this sort of a discussion, and that the people listen in and draw their own conclusions.

EFFECT OF A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT ON U.S. COMMITMENTS

The Chairman. Do you think, Mr. Kennan, if we should be able to have negotiations and reach a conclusion which is not happy or
satisfactory, but nevertheless is tolerable, that this could reasonably be considered as a betrayal of this commitment to the South Vietnamese?

This is an odd question. It grows out of these recent meetings in Honolulu, and it is perhaps an easier way—

Senator Gore. Would you restate that question?

The CHAIRMAN. It wasn't very well stated. Perhaps the best way to put it is, what do you think of the reports of the recent meeting in Honolulu? The reason they bother me is that we have further committed ourselves to a point where any kind of negotiated settlement short of what is called victory would be considered a betrayal of our commitments. This is what bothers me. I wonder if you could comment on that?

Mr. KENNAN. Well, of course, this is what you often hear and read. I read a column just a day or two ago in which even the idea of trying to defend enclaves was described as a betrayal of our South Vietnamese allies or associates.

There are a number of things to say about this. It seems to me, first of all, that the South Vietnamese have had a tremendous amount of aid from this country already, an amount which we would never be able to give in equal measure to any great number of countries abroad if they were to ask it of us, because we simply don't have resources in that magnitude.

Now, the aid we are giving them and the situation we have with relations to them today in South Vietnam is not just our doing. They asked for it. They wanted us to do this. They wanted us to come in. They wanted us to help them. They must surely have been aware that this could not constitute a blank check on all the resources and all the manpower of the United States, that there must be limits to what we could afford to give to any one situation of this sort and to any one foreign political authority. And I would say this: that I should think that even though our aid to them were to stop today, which I am not advocating, but even though it were, I think they would have had about 10 times as much from this country as anybody has any right to feel that he has a right to, if you can understand that statement.

The CHAIRMAN. I do understand it.

In other words, the short answer to the first thought I had is that a settlement which is acceptable to us—and I am sure it would be a settlement with honor, could never be considered as a betrayal of our commitment—such as they are.

I must say I am very unhappy about this word "commitments." You have mentioned it; you already have discussed it so I won't go over it again. The nature of the commitment seems to me to be less than clear, and not one in which the country as a whole played a very important part and I doubt very seriously today if the country understands it.

THE HONOLULU PARLEY

In this morning's paper I read just one paragraph, reporting on the Honolulu parley. It says:

The solid support given the leaders of South Vietnam by President Johnson in their Honolulu meeting strikes many officials and diplomats here—
This is at the United Nations—
as a barrier to a negotiated settlement of the war.

This is what gave thought to this. This is an article by Drew Middleton in the New York Times. One other sentence reads:

They reason that • • • the increased involvement of the United States in
the country's economic, educational, and social program, has removed any
prospect of forming a more broadly based government with which North Vietnam
might be willing to negotiate.

This bothers me very much because it seems we may have a fur­
ther obstacle to a negotiated settlement. The article goes on:

The majority view was that the agreements solidified the United States-
South Vietnam alliance and would lengthen and expand the war.

This is reporting upon the effect of the Honolulu meeting among
the delegates in the United Nations.

Would you care to comment on that?

Mr. KENNAN. This checks, I must say, entirely with my own opinion.
It does seem to me that if we had wanted to develop to the utmost the
prospects for a peaceful solution of this conflict, the first thing we
should have been concerned to do at this time was to retain the inde­
pendence of our position and not to get it any more closely associated
than it has to be with that of another political authority which shares
only in part our interest and our aspirations.

Now, I have no doubt that the South Vietnamese in some respects
deserve our sympathy, and I don't want to speak about them in an
unsympathetic way. But they have their own axes to grind. These
are not the same as ours. I doubt that their aspirations would check
entirely with ours. And I must say that it gives me a very, very uneasy
feeling to read the joint declaration to which we subscribed the other
day with them there in Honolulu.

GENERAL EFFECT OF INTERNATIONAL DECLARATIONS

I understand the motives that enter into it. I realize that the senti­
ments expressed in this declaration are very commendable ones from
our point of view, and that the right words were used. But I am a
historian of sorts, and I—perhaps my memory goes back too far, but
it seems to me—that this is where we came in
many years ago
in
other
situations.
I can recall Secretary of State Hay getting the European powers
to sign up to declarations of high virtueousness of intent in the open­
door crisis in 1898, declarations which didn't affect their behavior, nor,
I may say, ours, very deeply in the succeeding years.
I can remember, for example, some of our good allies during the
period of the Russian intervention—

The CHAIRMAN. When was that?

Mr. KENNAN. 1918, 1919, this specific incident was, during the Peace
Conference—some of our allies persuading Admiral Kolchak, the head
of the anti-Communist forces in Siberia, to sign up to a declaration
of high democratic principle precisely for the purpose of getting aid
out of the United States. In fact, our associates wrote the document
for him in terms that they thought would appeal to the idealistic
American mind. But it all had no real effect. The prerequisites for
this sort of thing were nonexistent in Siberia at that time. Anybody
who knew the situation could have told us that. Kolchak himself was totally swept away within a year and executed.

And I remember declarations of this sort during the recent war. I wouldn't want to say that the situations were exactly parallel, but I cannot forget declarations like the Cairo Declaration, or the declaration on liberated Europe, in which we got people who had quite different ideas, really, about political values, to sign up to documents which looked fine on American terms, promising sweetness and light and democracy and moderation and all these things, and usually—in all of these instances, in fact—we had cause to regret these things later.

I would prefer not to see us join with other people of different tongue and different cultural and political tradition in signing up to general language of this sort, because I think that it usually rises up to penalize you in the course of time.

Now, I hope that this will not be the case with the Honolulu Declaration. God grant that there is some reality in this, and some understanding on the other side for these things as we see them. But experience does not suggest that there is, and it is this that bothers me.

UNDERSTANDING OF THE HONOLULU DECLARATION

The CHAIRMAN. Do you have any reason to believe that General Ky has any deep understanding of this kind of a document?

Mr. KENNAN. Well, this is precisely what seems to me to be implausible. I have no doubt that General Ky has many estimable qualities and I would not for a moment want to speak in a manner derogatory to his person, but nevertheless, he has grown up in a wholly different political atmosphere than our people have, and I am simply skeptical that he, signing such a document, could mean the same thing with these words, that we do; and if he does not, there is apt to be a day of reckoning. This is what diplomatic history shows.

The CHAIRMAN. You mentioned you are a historian of sorts. It is my memory that you have given good deal of thought to history.

Mr. Reporter, before I proceed with regard to that quote from Drew Middleton, I wish the whole article be put in the record so it will be complete.

(The article referred to follows:)

HONOLULU PARLEY STIRS DOUBTS AT U.N.

(By Drew Middleton, special to the New York Times)

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., February 9.—The solid support given the leaders of South Vietnam by President Johnson at their Honolulu meeting strikes many officials and diplomats here as a barrier to a negotiated settlement of the war. They reason that the President's endorsement of Lt. Gen. Nguyen Van Thieu, South Vietnam's Chief of State, and of Air Vice Marshal Nguyen Cuo Ky, the Premier, as well as the increased involvement of the United States in the country's economic, educational, and social programs, has removed any prospect of forming a more broadly based government with which North Vietnam might be willing to negotiate.

On January 20, Secretary General Thant suggested discussions leading to the formation of a government involving all elements in South Vietnam, including the Communist National Liberation Front. This is now ruled out both by the accords between Washington and Saigon and by the stated intransigence of Premier Ky toward any dealings with the Communists, the sources said.

"We are back to where we were when the bombing started," one said.
Only a minority were prepared to accept the idea that the United States might be forced to act outside the framework of the Honolulu accords if events made this necessary. The majority view was that the agreements solidified the United States-South Vietnam alliance and would lengthen and expand the war. The shock given peace hopes here by the agreements is explained by the emphasis placed by the majority of the nonaligned delegations, including those from many African states, on the vital importance of including the National Liberation front if there is to be successful negotiations.

Some sources now found it more difficult to accept the U.S. promises to withdraw troops and dismantle military bases in view of its economic aid commitments. These were considered by some as a form of “neocolonialism” that would bind South Vietnam more closely to the United States and inhibit the formation of a truly independent nonaligned, united country.

The United States delegation takes the position that the South Vietnamese leaders’ attitude is normal under the circumstances and that they could have said little except what they did. This referred to statements by Premier Ky and General Thieu that they would not negotiate with or recognize the Vietcong, the military arm of the National Liberation Front, and to Premier Ky’s reference to the latter as the “national enslavement front.”

The American mission insists that the peace effort in the United Nations continues, although there are no signs of progress. The effort to find an effective form of United Nations intervention that would hasten peace talks is continuing despite the pessimism aroused by the Honolulu meeting.

The objective remains a United Nations declaration calling on the combatants to negotiate. This would be along the general line of the U.S. resolution placed on the Security Council agenda last Wednesday, but the declaration ostensibly would be the work of the nonaligned nations rather than the powers concerned.

Some African states that have been most active in the private discussions have questioned the wisdom of presenting a declaration before more is known about the attitude of the North Vietnamese and Chinese Governments toward peace talks.

AGGRESSIVE NATURE OF CHINA

The Chairman. Something has been said on this matter of China. I want to clarify it just a step further. The nature of the commitment to South Vietnam—and you have already described it considerably—seems to me so out of proportion to what is involved there that surely some other consideration beyond Vietnam must be involved. I can’t imagine a commitment such as has been described could have been just for this rather limited purpose. I think it does involve China and I think previous questions have indicated this. There was some passing reference made this morning to the aggressive nature of China.

Now, as a historian, is it your impression that China, when she was a strong country in the past, has been inclined to military aggressiveness such as was characteristic of Germany in two instances recently and other countries from time to time?

Mr. Kennan. No. It is my impression that the Chinese are tremendously preoccupied with what used to be called “face”—with prestige—with the outward aspects of authority and respect; and that sometimes, as in the present situation, their language can be very violent, and extreme, but that by and large they are very prudent people when it comes to military action.

The Chairman. Perhaps I didn’t phrase my question as carefully as I should have. I was really trying to exclude the present, as you said this morning, hysterical state of the present Communist regime. I was trying to make this a historical question. We realize that they are under very different circumstances now from what they were 50 years ago or a hundred years ago or a thousand years ago. They are
suffering from what you described very well this morning as a kind of a hysterical state.
But traditionally they have not been noted as very aggressive people militarily.

Is that true or not in your view?

Mr. KENNAN. That is my impression, yes.

The CHAIRMAN. More recently, a statement was made the other day and was this morning referred to during discussion of the Indian matter and I thought I remembered a statement made by General Taylor, while he was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. This was made on Thursday, February 14, 1963, before the Committee on Appropriations. I think it bears upon the question.

This is page 9 of that hearing—Mr. Sikes of Florida asked him:

Let me talk about Red China and the Indian operation. Did the Indians actually start this military operation?

General TAYLOR. They were edging forward in the disputed area; yes, sir.

I would be perfectly willing to put it all in the record; I don't wish to burden the record and take the time.

On page 10 Mr. Sikes says:

Where is it with relation to the generally accepted international boundary?

They were talking about the northeast boundary that this incident referred to.

General Taylor. That is hard to say because there is no generally accepted international boundary. I am sorry to be vague about this, but I can assure you that I spent several hours trying to find out where the McMahon line is. Actually you find the maps differ on this. The terrain is so terribly rugged, there has been no accurate mapping and no accurate boundary lines or markers placed.

This is all available. I won't burden the record with it. But it strikes me to say or to use this as an example of an aggression is rather tenuous. And with regard to Tibet, has not the status of Tibet been a matter of considerable controversy for a long time?

Mr. KENNAN. Yes, of course it has, and the Chinese did regard it as part of their area of sovereignty. I don't say this excuses what they did there. It puts it in a different category.

The CHAIRMAN. But I mean a long time ago, and not just by the Communist Chinese.

Mr. KENNAN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Is it not true that the Nationalist Chinese regarded Tibet as a part of China, not since Mao Tse-tung came in.

Mr. KENNAN. Senator Fulbright, there have been very few of the troubles we have been having in the last few years which we would not have had with any other Chinese regime. A lot of this is national.

REASONS FOR CHINA'S BEHAVIOR

The CHAIRMAN. I don't wish to overplay this but I think when we look at specific cases and examine the circumstances surrounding them, their actions as distinguished from their words have not been unusually aggressive or even as aggressive as many of our Western countries. In view of the history of China during the last century beginning with the opium wars, running up to the Second World War, would you not
Mr. KENNAN. Yes.

I think we have to remember that we deal with the Chinese today at the end of a century in which they had very, very unhappy experiences with Western powers generally. I don't think that the blame for this was entirely on the Western powers. There was usually a good deal of connivance on the Chinese side at these relationships of imperialism.

But, by and large, these were very unhappy experiences. They were humiliating to the Chinese people, and there has accumulated a fund here of sensitivity and resentment which we are probably harvesting today. We have to bear that in mind.

The CHAIRMAN. My time is up but I would like to clarify that one point that their connivance that irritated us or provoked us. If I remember my history at all, take, for example, the opium war.

Do you see any excuse for waging a war to force a country to accept opium for the use of their people?

Mr. KENNAN. No, Senator, I don't. All I meant to convey by that was something which is also relevant to the opium war; it was that a number of highly placed Chinese also profited very well from the opium trade. This was not all so simple.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, that is true. They were bribed. They had a number of their people who were bribed; there is no doubt about that. This is quite true. But for a country to take advantage of another country, that was so weak—and China was very weak in the dying days of the Manchu dynasty—and to subvert its local officials and to wage a war for this reason seems to me about as outrageous as any war I can think of.

Mr. KENNAN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. And you know there was a succession of, in effect, occupations and invasions of a very weak and helpless country. Isn't that generally so?

Mr. KENNAN. Yes, I think this is true.

The CHAIRMAN. Did they attack any other Western country during that period.

Mr. KENNAN. No, I fully agree with you here. I think that the ferociousness of Chinese policy in the past and somewhat today is often a matter of words rather than of actions. I just would say this: it seems to me that the Chinese, if you look back historically, have not been an easy country to deal with. They have had ideas of being the center of the universe.

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, yes.

Mr. KENNAN. And all that, which have presented problems for other people. My own feeling is that I think a long period in which we had perhaps as little as possible to do with them, kept our distance and tried to be reasonably restrained and polite, might be helpful in our relations with them.

The CHAIRMAN. Don't misunderstand me, I don't cite this as an excuse for their present conduct. I think it is as outrageous as you think it is, but the fact is there are these old reasons that I think affect their attitude.
Being from the South, I am not unmindful of the fact that for a considerable number of years after Reconstruction people regarded southerners as being irrational in their attitude toward Yankees; maybe this was our fault, we shouldn't have been, but it was a fact of life, wasn't it?

Mr. KENNAN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. And still is to some extent.

I would like to pursue this longer. I wish to put in the record at this point an article by you on November 22 which bears upon this China problem. You are familiar with it, I am sure. You wrote it, it was published in the New York Times Magazine on November 22.

Mr. KENNAN. This last November?

The CHAIRMAN. 1964.

Mr. KENNAN. 1964, yes.

The CHAIRMAN. It bears upon the China problem.

Mr. KENNAN. Quite right.

(The article referred to follows:)

[From the New York Times magazine, Nov. 22, 1964]

A FRESH LOOK AT OUR CHINA POLICY

(By George F. KENNAN)

At the heart of all our difficulties in the Far East lies a preposterous and almost incomprehensible fact. The great country of China, forming the heart of Asia, a country which for many years we befriended above all others and in defense of whose interests, in part, we fought the Pacific war, has fallen into the hands of a group of embittered fanatics; wedded to a dated and specious ideology but one which holds great attraction for masses of people throughout Asia; finding in this ideology a rationale for the most ruthless exertion of power over other people; associating this ideological prejudice with the most violent currents of traditional nationalism and xenophobia; linking their power to the arrogance and pretension traditional to governing groups in a country which long regarded itself as the center of the world; consumed with ambition to extend to further areas of Asia the dictatorial authority they now wield over the Chinese people themselves; sponsoring for this reason every territorial claim of earlier Chinese Governments for which history could show even the dimmest evidence; and now absolutely permeated with hatred toward ourselves, not only because the ideology pictures us all as villains, but also because we, more than any other people, have had the strength and the temerity to stand in their path and to obstruct the expansion of their power.

We have had no choice but to place ourselves in that path, for to have done otherwise would have been both to run out on the commitments with which we emerged from the Pacific war and to forfeit at once all the most important fruits of our victory in the war. An Asia dominated by people so prejudiced against us, ideologically, as the Chinese Communists, so dedicated to the destruction of everything we value, would obviously have been more dangerous to the interests of our country than the limited Japanese power we fought the Pacific war to destroy. In asking us to accept their domination of Asia, the Chinese Communists were asking us, in effect, to hand over to them the fruits of our victory over Japan and to render that victory meaningless for ourselves.

And so the conflict developed: the Chinese Communists trying to bring about our physical expulsion from the Far Eastern area, to ruin our world influence, to reduce us to a position of helplessness and ignominy; we, for our part, trying primarily to prevent the further extension of their power or their dominant influence to those insular and peninsular appendages of the Asiatic continent—South Korea, Taiwan, southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and the Japanese and Philippine archipelagoes—which had managed to hold out and to continue to lead some sort of independent political existence.